d20 system

The Ultimate Weapons Walk Among Us

Polyhedron

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CRUSH YOUR FOES BENEATH AN IRON BOOT

MECHA CRUSADE

RPGA NETWORK

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genre extends an existing trend into the future. As long as there's been violence, there's been the urge to protect oneself against it. Cavemen covered themselves in animal hides, centurions carried shields, and knights wore, well, shining armor. In the 19th century, naval architects started putting sheets of metal on ship hulls. In the 20th century, inventors wrapped a cannon in armor plating and put it on tank treads. The mecha genre brings the knight in shining armor and the Sherman tank crew into the future. Your lance is made of pure plasma, and your armor is made of megatanium, but you are absolutely the culmination of that warrior tradition.

Another trope of the mecha genre is the mix of man and machine. Your character will spend much of his time in his mecha suit—so much so that you might as well come with a special character sheet for when you're in your mecha. Success on the battlefield depends on making both machine and man function at their best. When your character talks to or fights another mecha, he can't be sure who—if anyone—is inside the matrix of fiber-optic cable, powerful servomotors, and ultradense armor plating.

Finally, because most mecha comes from Japanese anime cartoons, *Mecha Crusade* has many of the same genre conventions as anime. The heroes are generally young, often still in high school. There's a lot of attention paid to romance and relationships—a juxtaposition that RPG writer Ken Hite once called "Dear Diary: I saved the world today, and Rick likes me!"

What's In the Game

Mecha Crusade has everything you need to start your own mecha-based adventures.

Chapter 1: Characters. All of the basic and advanced classes described in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* are at your disposal, and we introduce six new ones: The mecha ace, mecha shock trooper, cyborg, sleeper agent, wing captain, and weapons designer. Likewise, the feats and skills from *d20 Modern* function normally, but *Mecha Crusade* offers a few new ways to use your skills and a smattering of new feats.

Chapter 2: Building a Mecha. This is the heart of the *Mecha Crusade* rules, a system for building your own mechas, from small scout mechas loaded with chameleon skin and stealth technology to armored leviathans so massive that the earth shudders with their every step. By combining different mecha parts, you can create the mecha of your dreams—provided your requisition budget can handle it.

Chapter 3: Running *Mecha Crusade*. This chapter covers special situations, mostly new combat rules important to mechas. Rules for homing missiles, flying mechas, and combining mechas into immense metabots are included here. There's also enough high-tech personal weaponry—laser pistols and plasma rifles, for example—to enable adventures in which your characters have no access to mechas.

Chapter 4: The Mecha Crusade Crusade. This example campaign setting features the outbreak of war between Earth and its far-flung solar system colonies. An increasingly authoritarian world government, responding to ecological and political crises, demands more and more from thriving settlements on the Moon, Mars, the Asteroid Belt, and Jupiter's moons. The colonists rebel against what they see as heavy-handed repression, and everyone mobilizes for war. Characters represent the best and brightest of either side in the conflict—or they can be mercenary mecha pilots, offering their services to the highest-bidding faction. Sample mechas are included. This chapter also discusses some more off-beat approaches to mecha campaigns.

The d20 Modern Rules

If a particular topic isn't covered, simply refer to the newly released *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*. Because we wanted to cram as much mecha-specific stuff in here as possible, we've intentionally given only a light treatment of other topics, and we've avoided restating rules covered there. The *d20 Modern* rules should have the answers to anything left unstated or unclear in *Mecha Crusade*.

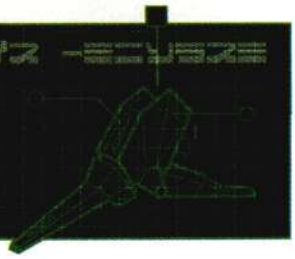
In particular, this game wouldn't exist without the authors of *d20 Modern:* Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, and Charles Ryan. They've created a set of rules that easily transformed into the game you're reading now.

Prepare for Launch

If you're a player new to *Mecha Crusade*, simply create a character according to the rules in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*, paying attention to the feats and skills described in Chapter 1 of this game. In particular, you'll want to take the Mecha Operation feat; moving and fighting in a Mecha can be frustrating without it.

Your Gamemaster (GM) will give you a budget in build points (bp) for your first mecha. Read Chapter 2 as you construct your mecha. Then skim the topics covered in Chapter 3 and you're ready to play!

CHAPTER ONE: CHARACTERS



MECHA PILOTS ARE AS DIVERSE AS THE MACHINES THEY CONTROL. ***Some are grizzled military veterans, others are brilliant scientists, and still others are highly trained teenagers who balance normal studies with a secret life as a mecha pilot.***

The six basic hero classes and the twelve advanced classes presented in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* are all appropriate for *Mecha Crusade*. Specifically, the standard game's advanced classes look like this in the futuristic example setting, which posits a war between Earth and her solar colonies:

Soldier: Earth has a large standing army of "peacekeepers," and each of the colonies has a smaller security force.

Martial Artist: Various schools of hand-to-hand combat are as common in the future as they are today.

Gunslinger: In the future, handguns are somewhat less important for personal protection than they are today. Still, many criminal syndicates and police forces, both on Earth and among the colonies, employ Gunslingers.

Infiltrator: Corporate espionage is rampant in 2053, so Infiltrators are common. Many seek to steal plans for new mecha prototypes and experimental components.

Daredevil: Holovid entertainment is as popular in the 2050s as television is today. While special effects can simulate most dangerous spectacles, audiences like to see entertainers put life and limb at risk. Daredevils are more rare than in the early part of the 20th century, however.

Bodyguard: From captains of industry to important political figures, many luminaries need protecting from the crime, terrorism, and warfare that are rampant in 2053.

Field Scientist: Especially among the colonies, Field Scientists are common, because most scientific research is done in lonely outposts somewhere in the solar system.

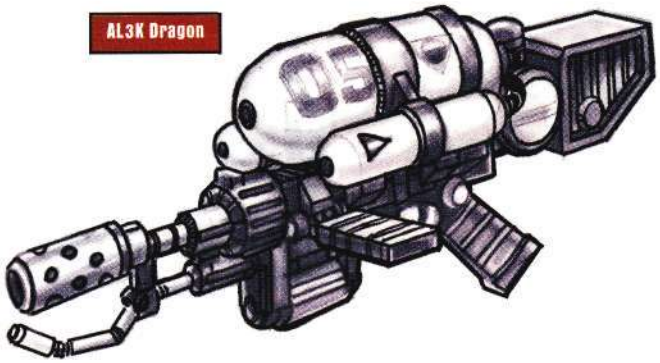
Techie: Technology is more important than ever, and most people rely utterly on the machines around them to get the necessities of life. On the colonies, you can't breathe, grow food, or walk around without at least some assistance from machines. And when the most important units on a battlefield are high-tech suits of powered armor, technology is paramount there, too.

Field Medic: Life is cheap among the security forces, especially on Earth, but elite units generally employ Field Medics to keep well-trained troopers alive to fight again.

Investigator: Crime is as common in the future as it is today. While Investigators rarely pilot mechas, their investigations may bring them in pursuit of criminals who can't be apprehended any other way.

Personality: While the cult of celebrity isn't as strong in 2053 as it is in the early part of the century, many holovid stars, musicians, and politicians are known across the solar system. As the war progresses, some mecha pilots may become celebrities themselves.

Negotiator: Though war has erupted between the colonies and Earth, delicate negotiations between the two factions continue. And among the colonies, there's a lot of negotiation required just to keep the lunar colonies, Martian colonies, and more far-flung outposts working together.



NEW ADVANCED CLASSES

None of the above classes overtly help you pilot a mecha, although you can do so by making wise feat and skill choices. The following advanced classes are designed to make good mecha pilots regardless of the character's other interests. They all have access to the Pilot skill and various mecha feats (also described below).

Mecha Shock Trooper

Among mecha pilots, the Mecha Shock Troopers are regarded as brave—or suicidal. Piloting fast mechas designed for melee combat, Shock Troopers close with the enemy as quickly as possible, then use their high-tech weapons to destroy their foes. It takes great courage to fly toward a squad of plasma cannons when everyone

else is running away, but that's the job of a Shock Trooper. Physical prowess is paramount for the Shock Trooper, who relies on his amplified muscles and reflexes to survive on the high-tech battlefield.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to excel in mecha-vs.-mecha melee combat and the physical aspects of mecha operation.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Strong hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

Shock Trooper

Requirements

To qualify to become a Mecha Shock Trooper, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Skills: Knowledge (mecha) 3 ranks.

Feat: Mecha Operation.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Mecha Shock Trooper advanced class.

Hit Die

The Mecha Shock Trooper gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Mecha Shock Trooper gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Mecha Shock Trooper's class skills are as follows.

Computer Use (Int), Drive (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, mecha, popular culture, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 3 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Mecha Shock Trooper advanced class:

Mecha Weapons Proficiency: The Mecha Shock Trooper gains Mecha Weapons Proficiency as a bonus feat.

Bonus Feats: At 1st, 5th, and 9th level, a Mecha Shock Trooper gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Mecha Shock Trooper must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it:

Table 1–01: The Mecha Shock Trooper

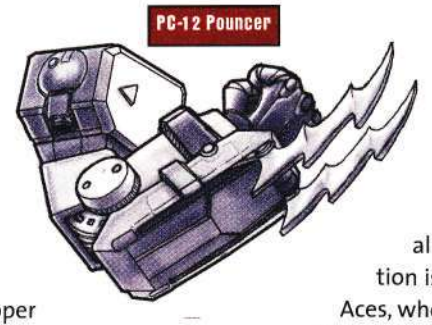
Class Level	*Base Attack Bonus*	*Fort*	*Ref*	*Will*	*Special*	*Defense Bonus*	*Reputation Bonus*
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Bonus feats	+1	+1
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Weapon Specialization	+2	+1
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Extra melee damage	+2	+1
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Knockdown	+3	+2
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+4	+2
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Improved Grab	+4	+2
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Topple	+5	+3
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Shield block	+6	+3
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+6	+3
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Supreme Critical	+7	+4

Acrobatic, Combat Reflexes, Combat Throw, Elusive Target, Improved Combat Throw, Unbalance Opponent, Weapon Focus (any mecha melee weapon).

Weapon Specialization: At 2nd level, a Mecha Shock Trooper gains weapon specialization with a specific melee weapon that he also has applied the Weapon Focus feat or class feature to. You get a +2 bonus on damage rolls with the chosen weapon.

Extra Melee Damage: A 3rd-level Shock Trooper is particularly adept at attacking other mechas with melee weapons. Additionally, slam attacks made with the mecha's fists deal damage as if the mecha were one size larger than it actually is (Large mechas deal 2d6 points of damage, Huge mechas deal 2d8 points of damage, and so on). A 3rd-level Mecha Shock Trooper piloting a Colossal mecha deals 4d8 points of damage.

Knockdown: When the Mecha Shock Trooper makes a bull rush attempt and pushes his foe back at least 4 meters, he can forego 2 meters of the push to make a trip attempt against that foe that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. The trip attempt occurs at the end of the movement from the push. Each additional 2 meters of push the Mecha Shock Trooper foregoes grants a +2 circumstance bonus to the trip attempt, but the bull rush must still move the foe at least 2 meters.



For example, if the Mecha Shock Trooper beats his foe's Strength check by 10 points, he can push the foe back a total of 6 meters (2 meters for succeeding, and an additional 2 meters for each 5 points by which he won the Strength check). He also could push his foe back 4 meters, then make a trip attempt, or push his foe back 2 meters, then make a trip attempt with a +2 circumstance bonus.

Improved Grab: At 6th level, the Mecha Shock Trooper gains the Improved Grab extraordinary ability whenever he is piloting a mecha. Improved grab works only on opponents at least one size smaller than the Shock Trooper's mecha. For more information on Improved Grab, see Chapter 8 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*.

Topple: At 3rd level, the Mecha Shock Trooper has become adept at knocking other mechas prone, pushing them beyond what their gyroscopes and inertial compensators can compensate for. If the Mecha Shock Trooper scores a critical hit in melee against another mecha, that mecha's pilot must succeed at a Reflex saving throw (DC equal to damage dealt) or fall prone. A toppled mecha also takes damage normally and is subject to the critical hit normally (see Chapter 3 of *Mecha Crusade* for rules on critical hits against mechas).

Shield Block: Against melee attacks, the shield component of an 8th-level Mecha Shock Trooper is more effective because the Trooper can anticipate the likely melee attacks in any combat situation. The equipment bonus to Defense that a shield component provides is doubled against melee attacks. For example, a Mecha Shock Trooper with a Barricade shield gains a +16 equipment bonus to Defense against melee attacks and retains the shield's normal +8 equipment bonus to Defense against ranged attacks.

Supreme Critical: When a 10th-level Mecha Shock Trooper scores a critical hit in melee against another mecha, he can roll twice on the critical hit table (in Chapter 3 of Mecha Crusade), then take the result he likes.

Mecha Ace

The sheer delight of flying across the sky, the icy calm when you've got a target in your sights, and the camaraderie of your squadron after a battle—those are the highest virtues of the Mecha Ace.

The Mecha Ace is a pilot who concentrates on the art of the maneuver. He is capable of graceful swoops, blindly fast evasive maneuvers, and unerring interceptions. Ranged weapons are his favorites; he likes to deal death from an impersonal distance. Perfect hand-eye coordination is taken for granted among Mecha Aces, who alternately impress and infuriate other mecha pilots with their bravado.

Select this class if you want to fly better than anyone else, and if you want lasers, plasma cannons, and guided missiles to be your weapons of choice. You have all the derring-do of the World War I fighter ace, brought into the 21st century.

Most Mecha Aces were once Fast heroes, although a significant number were Charismatic heroes.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Mecha Ace, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Skills: Pilot 6 ranks.

Feat: Mecha Operation.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Mecha Ace advanced class.

Hit Die

The Mecha Ace gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Mecha Ace gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Mecha Ace's class skills are as follows.

Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Drive (Dex), Gamble (Wis), Knowledge (current events, mecha, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Navigation (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Mecha Ace advanced class:

Mecha Dodge: A combination of quick, darting moves and raw velocity makes the Mecha Ace hard to hit. When flying in a mecha, the Mecha Ace gains a +2 dodge bonus to Defense.

Familiarity: Starting at 2nd level, a Mecha Ace gains a bonus on Pilot and Repair checks when used on a mecha he designates as familiar. The same bonus is applied to the Mecha Ace's attack rolls with the mecha's ranged weapons. This bonus is +1 at 2nd level and increases by 1 every two levels thereafter (4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th).

Mecha Ace

Jake Parker

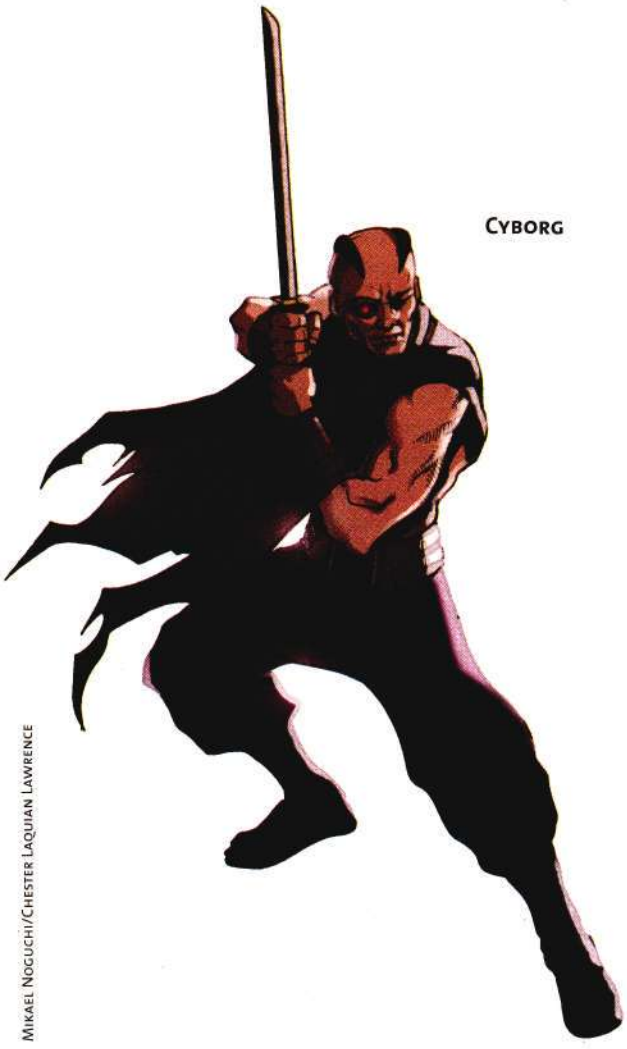
To designate a mecha as familiar, the Mecha Ace must have operated it for at least three months. Minor changes and upgrades to the mecha don't affect familiarity, but if the Mecha Ace switches to a mecha with a different size, different base material, different flight system, or more than one new weapon, he must operate it for at least a month before he is familiar with it. The Mecha Ace can be familiar with only one mecha at a time.

Fly-By Attack: When piloting a flying mecha, the Mecha Ace can take a move action (including a dive) and an attack action at any point during the move. The Mecha Ace cannot take a second move action during a round when it makes a flyby attack.

Evasive Action: At 5th level, the Mecha Ace can make a Pilot check to lessen the damage dealt by a successful against his mecha. If the Pilot check exceeds the attack roll, the damage dealt to the Mecha Ace's mecha is halved (round fractions down, minimum of 1 point of damage). The Mecha

Table 1–02: The Mecha Ace

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+2	+1	Mecha Dodge	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+2	Familiarity +1	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+2	Fly-By Attack	+2	+2
4th	+3	+1	+4	+2	Familiarity +2	+2	+2
5th	+3	+1	+4	+3	Evasive Action	+3	+3
6th	+4	+2	+5	+3	Familiarity +3	+3	+3
7th	+5	+2	+5	+4	Instinctive Maneuverability	+4	+4
8th	+6	+2	+6	+4	Familiarity +4	+4	+4
9th	+6	+3	+6	+4	Improved Evasive Action	+5	+5
10th	+7	+3	+7	+5	Familiarity +5	+5	+5



CYBORG

MIKAEL NOGUCHI/CHESTER LAQUIAN LAWRENCE

Ace can make an evasive action check once per round.

Instinctive Maneuverability: At 7th level, the Mecha Ace has an instinctive command of the vectored thrusters of his mecha. Any mecha he flies improves by one maneuverability class.

Improved Evasive Action: At 9th level, the Mecha Ace's evasive action improves. A successful Pilot check negates all damage dealt by the attack.

Cyborg

Most mecha pilots blur the line between man and machine. Cyborgs obliterate it.

Cyborgs are soldiers—generally but not always mecha pilots—who have a number of high-tech machines implanted directly into their bodies. A fusion of flesh and metal, Cyborgs rely on high-tech components to keep their organic parts functioning. As they progress in this character class, Cyborg characters acquire more and better machine components. By 10th level, a Cyborg may be more machine than man.

Moreso than many character classes, Cyborg characters require some work on the part of the gamemaster. Whenever the Cyborg attains another character level, the gamemaster should provide the story justification for the Cyborg getting the surgery necessary to acquire more machine parts. Conversely, gamemaster and players need to accept the story conceit that Cyborgs only attain new cybernetic parts when their character has attained a new level. Viewed from within the world of *Mecha Crusade*, Cyborg equipment is available at any time. Theoretically, any character can simply have the surgery done and install as much cyberware as he likes. But around the game table, it doesn't work that way. Non-Cyborg characters aren't interested in cyberware, and for some reason, Cyborgs only get cybernetic upgrades when they attain new levels. The story justification might be that the Cyborg character despises his cyberware, or maybe the surgery is so dangerous that Cyborgs need special clearances just to get new implants.

Select this class if you want to be able to shrug off damage that would drop an ordinary character or access to special abilities that no other character class has. But if you want to interact with NPCs, Cyborg isn't the class for you.

TABLE 1–03: THE CYBORG

Class Level	*Base Attack Bonus*	*Fort*	*Ref*	*Will*	*Special*	*Defense Bonus*	*Reputation Bonus*
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Cyberware	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Bonus feat	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Cyberware	+2	+1
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Cyberware	+2	+1
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+3	+1
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Cyberware	+3	+2
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	Cyberware	+4	+2
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+2
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Cyberware	+5	+3
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Cyberware	+5	+3

Table 1–04: Cyberware

Level + Con modifier	*Basic Cyberware*	*Improved Cyberware*
1	Vehicle I/O datajack (+4 equipment bonus on Pilot checks)	*na*
2	Synthskin and composite bone (2 free talents, one each from the Damage Reduction and Energy Resistance talent trees)	Improved vehicle datajack (as basic, but +6 on Pilot checks and +4 on Repair checks)
3	Blood nanites (heals twice as fast as normal)	Improved skin and bone (keep the two free talents and pick one more each from the Damage Reduction and Energy Resistance talent trees)
4	Retinal targeter (+1 equipment bonus on ranged attacks)	Improved blood nanites (heals ten times as fast as normal)
5	Robotic hand (1d6 lethal slam attack, +2 equipment bonus to Str)	Improved retinal targeter (as basic, but +2 bonus)
6	Servomotor augmentation (+2 equipment bonus to your choice of Str, Dex, or Con)	Improved Robotic Hand (has claws that emerge from forearm as free action, deal 1d10 lethal damage in melee; retain +2 Str bonus)
7	Full-spectrum sensor suite (gain benefit of Enigma sensors within 20 meters)	Improved servomotors (as basic, but +4 equipment bonus)
8	Adrenal booster (+4 Str, +4 Con, –2 Defense for 3 + Con modifer rounds, once per day)	Improved full-spectrum (as basic, but 40 meters)
9	Concealed laser pistol (laser generally emerges from hand or eye)	Improved adrenal booster (as basic but three times per day)
10+	Artificial body (character becomes construct but retains Int; HD become d10s and cyborg gains 10 bonus hit points)	Improved laser pistol (as basic, but equivalent to heavy laser pistol)

Many Cyborgs were once Tough heroes, if only because Tough heroes tend to appreciate the benefits of the Cyborg lifestyle.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Cyborg, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +2.

Feat: Endurance.

Special: Must have been reduced to –1 hit points or lower (generally during the battle that concluded the previous adventure), then brought back to full health in a high-tech hospital.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Cyborg advanced class.

Hit Die

The Cyborg gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Cyborg gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Cyborg's class skills are as follows.

Computer Use (Int), Craft (electronic, pharmaceutical) (Int), Disguise (Cha), Drive (Dex), Knowledge (current events, mechas, technology), Pilot (Dex), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Speak Language (none), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 3 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Cyborg advanced class:

Cyberware: Each time this class feature is earned, the cyborg gains a new cybernetic implant or receives an upgrade to an existing one. The cyborg chooses one piece of cyberware from Table 1–04. His Cyborg level plus Consititution modifier determines which cyberware he can choose. The improved versions of the cyberware listed on Table 1–04 can be selected only if the basic version is already installed in the Cyborg character. He can't choose

the same cyberware twice, except for servomotor augmentation, which can be chosen up to three times (once each for Strength, Dexterity, and Consititution).

Each piece of cyberware installed grants a cumulative –1 penalty to Charisma. Replacing basic cyberware with its improved counterpart doesn't increase the Charisma penalty.

Cyberware is visually obvious to even a casual observer. Cyborgs who try to fit into normal society use the Disguise skill to hide their implants (DC 10 + 2 per cyberware).

Bonus Feats: At 2nd, 5th, and 8th level, a Cyborg gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the cyborg must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it: Alertness, Athletic, Blind-Fight, Builder, Cautious, Focused, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Meticulous, Toughness.

Weapon Designer

For the last five years, almost all military research and development money goes to one place: mechas. The giant robot suits are simply too overpowering and versatile on the battlefield to ignore. You're an up-and-coming scientist with several important components to your name already. And naturally you relish the chance to test your designs firsthand.

The Weapon Designer advanced class combines the ability to pilot a mecha with an unparalleled knowledge of what makes high-tech powered armor work. Though your focus is the weapons systems installed in your mecha, you're also adept at eking extra performance out of the mecha's control, servomotor, and flight systems.

Select this class if you enjoy inventing new mecha components and "souping up" your mecha. You'll be capable in a mecha fight, but you're vulnerable outside your suit.

Smart heroes are the obvious candidates to become Weapon Designers, and other character classes will have to work hard to achieve the relatively difficult entry requirements.

WEAPON DESIGNER

MIKAEL NOGUCHI/CHESTER LAQUIAN LAWRENCE

Requirements

To qualify to become a weapon designer, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Skills: Computer Use 7 ranks, Craft (electronic) 7 ranks, Disable Device 5 ranks.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Weapon Designer advanced class.

Hit Die

The Weapon Designer gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Weapon Designer gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Weapon Designer's class skills are as follows.

Computer Use (Int), Craft (electronic, mechanical) (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Knowledge (earth and life sciences, mechas, physical sciences, pop culture, technology) (Int), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Weapon Designer advanced class:

Bonus Feat: At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the Weapon Designer gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Weapon Designer must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it (feats with

an asterisk are new for *Mecha Crusade* and are described below): Builder, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Control Disruption Attack*, Educated, Gearhead, Mecha Operation*, Mecha Weapons Proficiency*, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Plasma Overboost*, Point Blank Shot, Studious.

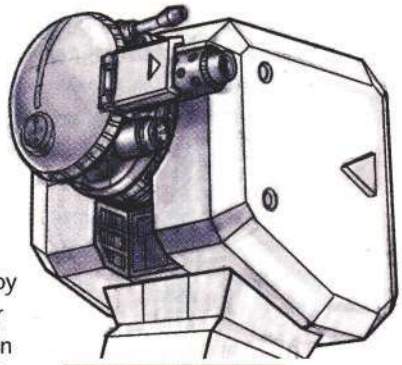
Extreme Mecha Weaponry: At 2nd level, a Weapon Designer knows mecha technology well enough to push it beyond its tested limits.

By spending 1 action point and making a Craft (electronic) skill check, the Weapon Designer can temporarily improve a mecha weapon's performance—at the risk of causing the mecha to need repairs later. The DC for the Craft check depends on the type of improvement being made, as shown on the table below.

Improvement	*Craft DC*	*Repair Chance (d%)*
+1 on damage	15	01–25
+2 on damage	20	01–50
+3 on damage	25	01–75
+2 m to range increment	15	01–25
+4 m to range increment	25	01–50
+1 equipment bonus on attack	20	01–25
+2 equipment bonus on attack	25	01–50
+3 equipment bonus on attack	30	01–75

The Weapon Designer performs the extreme modifications in 1 hour. She can't take 10 or take 20 on this check. If the check succeeds, the improvement lasts for a number of minutes equal to her weapon designer class level, beginning when the component is first used. The Weapon Designer selects the single improvement she wants to make prior to making the check. After the duration of the effect ends, the component reverts to its previous state and a repair chance percentile roll is made. The result of this roll indicates whether or not the component requires repairs before it can be used again.

Build Weapon System: Given time, a 4rd-level Weapon Designer can assemble weapon components out of off-the-shelf parts. Because mecha components aren't bought and sold on the open market, they're measured in build points, which represent the amount of high-tech and experimental gear used to construct them. Most military units that employ mechas simply give their junior officers a budget in build points, and the officers requisition the right mecha components for the mission.



M-2 Puma pop-up turret

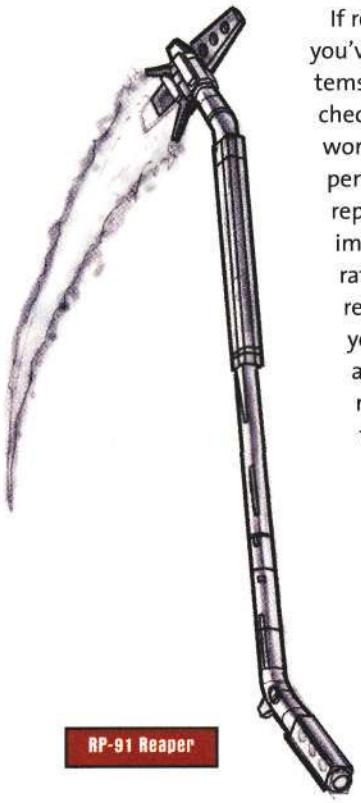
A Weapon Designer can requisition basic components and combine them in unorthodox ways to get more bang for the build point. To build a weapon system, select a component from Chapter 2 of *Mecha Crusade*, then spend half its build point cost in build points and one-tenth its build point cost in experience points. For example, if you're trying to build a Dragon flame thrower (3,000 bp), it'll cost you 1,500 build points and 300 XP. It takes one day (more or less uninterrupted) to construct a weapon component for each 1,000 build points in its full cost.

Extreme Mecha Thrusters: This class feature, attained at 6th level, functions exactly as Extreme Mecha Weaponry above, except that it allows the weapon designer to customize the flight systems on his mecha, according to the table below.

Improvement	*Craft DC*	*Repair Chance (d%)*
+2 equipment bonus on Pilot checks	15	01–25
+4 equipment bonus on Pilot checks	20	01–50
+6 equipment bonus on Pilot checks	25	01–75
Improve maneuverability by one category	25	01–25
+10 m bonus to fly speed	15	01–25
+20 m bonus to fly speed	25	01–50
+40 m bonus to fly speed	35	01–75

Table 1–05: The Weapon Designer

Class Level	*Base Attack Bonus*	*Fort*	*Ref*	*Will*	*Special*	*Defense Bonus*	*Reputation Bonus*
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bonus feat	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Extreme Mecha Weaponry	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Build Weapon System	+2	+1
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	+3	+1
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Extreme Mecha Thrusters	+3	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+4	+2
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Build Flight System	+4	+2
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Mecha Design Genius	+5	+3



RP-91 Reaper

If repairs are needed after you've souped up the control systems to get a bonus on Pilot checks, the mecha's controls still work, but poorly: take a –10 penalty on Pilot checks until repairs are made. Likewise, if you improve the maneuverability rating of your mecha and repairs are required afterward, your mecha has a maneuverability rating of clumsy until repairs are made. But if the thrusters fail (which might happen if you take the speed boosts above), the mecha plummets from the sky, taking 1d6 points of damage for each 4 meters fallen (20d6 maximum). A series of klaxons and warning lights indicate if and when the thrusters stop working.

Build Flight System: The 8th-level Weapon Designer has branched out from armaments to aerodynamics, avionics, and other flight-related disciplines. She now can design flight-related components (anything listed in the Flight Gear section of Chapter 2) using the same rules described in Build Weapon System, above. For example, a Weapon Designer can build Delta thruster boots for a Large mecha (4,000 build points) by spending 4 days, 2,000 build points, and 400 XP.

Mecha Design Genius: The 10th-level Weapon Designer is on the cutting edge of mecha creation, and other mecha builders regularly seek her advice on the intricacies of everything from servomotor heat-baffles to molecular differences in orbit-forged aluminum alloys. The Weapon Designer can build a complete mecha—base body, structural options, and all components—of her own design. This functions as the Build Mecha Weapon and Build Flight System class features above, except that the Weapon Designer can build an entire mecha. For example, a 10th-level Weapon Designer can build the equivalent to a Silvereye mecha (28,000 build points) by spending 28 days, 14,000 build points, and 2,800 XP.

Sleeper Agent

By the middle of the 21st century, the techniques of hypnosis, psychology, nanomedicine, and neuroscience have created a new kind of spy: the Sleeper Agent. The term used to mean an agent left "sleeping" undercover without a mission for years at a time. Now it means a spy who doesn't even realize she is a spy.

Sleeper Agents are programmed with hundreds of passwords, cover identities, drop points, and other tools of the spy trade. But they're buried so deep within the Sleeper's brain that even the most persistent interrogation won't reveal the Sleeper Agent's objective, employer, or mission details. Only a coded message—often delivered verbally, but sometimes embedded in a computer graphics file—will do the trick. The Sleeper Agent remembers what she needs to know, then forgets it at the end of the mission. Or at least that's how it works in theory. In practice, the brain of a Sleeper Agent sometimes releases information before it's supposed to, and its ability to delete unneeded memories is rarely perfect.

Player characters are these "imperfect" Sleeper Agents. They're troubled by strange dreams of people they've never met, and sometimes an unusual phrase in casual conversation releases a flood of technical information about a mission the character hasn't been assigned to—yet. The central conceit about the Sleeper Agent character is that each time she gains a level, she unlocks a little more of her own head.

In the world of *Mecha Crusade*, Sleeper Agents chase after the tastiest of espionage prizes: mecha weapon

Table 1–06: The Sleeper Agent

Class Level	*Base Attack Bonus*	*Fort*	*Ref*	*Will*	*Special*	*Defense Bonus*	*Reputation Bonus*
1st	+0	+2	+2	+0	Extra Occupation	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+0	Autohypnosis	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+1	Contact, low-level	+2	+1
4th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Extra Occupation	+2	+1
5th	+3	+4	+4	+1	Extra Talent	+3	+1
6th	+4	+5	+5	+2	Contact, mid-level	+3	+2
7th	+5	+5	+5	+2	Extra Occupation	+4	+2
8th	+6	+6	+6	+2	Extra Talent	+4	+2
9th	+6	+6	+6	+3	Contact, high-level	+5	+3
10th	+7	+7	+7	+3	Extra Occupation	+5	+3

designs and sometimes even prototype mechas themselves. Because Sleeper Agents generally don't come back in for retraining, they have both nonmecha and mecha combat prowess hard-wired into their brain. Every spy gets a different set of skills tailored to specific missions, but almost every Sleeper Agent has an expert martial artist, qualified marksman, and mecha test pilot locked away somewhere in her head.

Select this class if you'd rather steal someone else's cool mecha than build your own. If you want to be in the middle of the action whether you're in your mecha or not, the Sleeper Agent is for you. The Sleeper Agent class also allows a high degree of customization—there's no telling what training is buried in your brain—so it's a good choice if you like playing against type.

Many Sleeper Agents were once Dedicated heroes, because they're likely to survive the months of brainwashing, neurosurgery, and deep hypnosis with their sanity intact.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Sleeper Agent, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Skills: Concentration 4 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks.

Feats: Alertness or Attentive.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Sleeper Agent advanced class.

Hit Die

The Sleeper Agent gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Sleeper Agent gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The Sleeper Agent's class skills are as follows.

Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Disable Device (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Search (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Sleeper Agent advanced class:

Extra Occupation: At 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th level, the Sleeper Agent gains access to one of her alternate identities. In additional to a crushing amount of mundane personal information, the character learns a new occupation. Select any occupation listed in Chapter 1 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* whenever you attain this class feature. As long as you meet its prerequisites, you get all the benefits listed except for the Wealth Bonus Increase. For example, a 1st-level Sleeper Agent could awaken an alternate identity that was a low-level investigator for Unified Earth Police. Her player would select the Law Enforcement occupation described in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* and choose Gather Information and Intimidate as permanent class skills. She also could take Light Armor Proficiency as a bonus feat, but she wouldn't get the +1 wealth bonus increase that goes with the Law Enforcement occupation.

Autohypnosis: The Sleeper Agent gains access to the Autohypnosis skill, which is always considered a class skill for her. She can use her skill points to buy ranks in Autohypnosis, just like other skills in the game. Characters who aren't Sleeper Agents can't purchase ranks in Autohypnosis.

Sleeper Agent

Matt Hatton

Autohypnosis (Wis): Trained only. You have trained your mind to resist certain injuries and threats while also gaining a few select benefits.

Check: The DC and effect depend on the task you attempt.

Task	DC
Memorize	15
Tolerate poison	Poison's DC
Willpower	20
Scour deep memories	20

Memorize: You can attempt to memorize a long string of numbers, a long passage of verse, or a particularly difficult piece of information. Each successful check allows you to memorize up to 250 words or the equivalent of what could be comfortably contained on single sheet of paper. You always retain this information; however, you can recall it only with a successful Autohypnosis check.

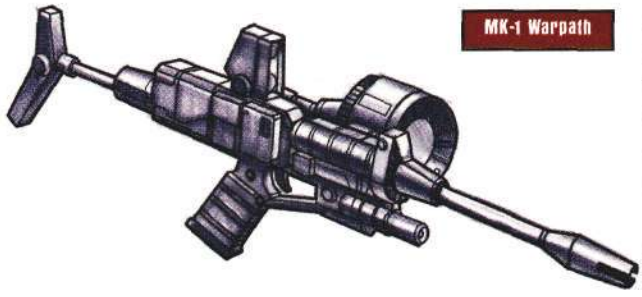
Tolerate Poison: In response to being poisoned, you can make an Autohypnosis check on your next action. A successful check grants you a +4 morale bonus on your saving throw to resist the poison's secondary damage.

Willpower: If reduced to 0 hit points (disabled), you may make an Autohypnosis check. If successful, you can perform a strenuous action without taking 1 point of damage. A failed check carries no penalties—you can choose not to perform the strenuous action. If you do perform the strenuous action after failing the check, you take 1 point of damage, as normal.

Scour Deep Memories: If you fail at a Knowledge check or similar check that doesn't ordinarily allow a retry, you can take a full-round action to search your trove of implanted memories for something helpful. If you succeed at an Autohypnosis check (DC 20), you may retry the original check with a +4 morale bonus. You can scour your memories only once per check.

Try Again? For memorize, you can make a check once per round. You can't try again to tolerate poison. You can't try again in the same round for willpower.

Special: You can take 10 on Autohypnosis checks, but you can't take 20.



Most uses of Autohypnosis are attack actions. Willpower is a free action that can be attempted once per round. Scour deep memories is a full-round action.

Contact: A Sleeper Agent of 3rd level or higher knows passwords and other secret signals that tie her into a network of associates and informants. Each time the sleeper agent gains a contact, the GM should develop a supporting character to represent the contact. The player can suggest the type of contact his or her character wants to gain, but the contact must be an ordinary character (not a heroic character, as described in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*).

Note that not all these contacts are Sleeper Agents themselves. They certainly might be, or they might be less-important agents that simply have orders to "give the customer whatever she wants if she gives you the three-fingered handshake." The Sleeper Agent can use these contacts for whatever she likes, even if it has nothing to do with (or actively opposes) the original mission for which she was programmed. Most spy operations are compartmentalized so that no one knows the whole mission, and even the curious wouldn't expect an accurate answer from a Sleeper Agent.

Contacts include informants, black marketeers, crime lords, journalists, street people, store clerks, air-taxi drivers, and others who can provide limited aid and information.

Table 1–07: The Wing Captain

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+0	+0	+1	+2	Leadership	+0	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+3	Exploit weakness	+1	+1
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+3	Bonus feat	+1	+1
4th	+3	+1	+2	+4	Plan	+1	+2
5th	+3	+1	+3	+4	Small-unit tactics	+2	+2
6th	+4	+2	+3	+5	No sweat	+2	+2
7th	+5	+2	+4	+5	Bonus feat	+2	+3
8th	+6	+2	+4	+6	Uncanny survival	+3	+3
9th	+6	+3	+4	+6	Sixth sense	+3	+3
10th	+7	+3	+5	+7	Fast tactics	+3	+34

A contact will not accompany a Sleeper Agent on missions or risk his or her life. A contact can, however, provide information or render a service (make a specific skill check on your behalf).

The Sleeper Agent can't call on the same contact more than once in a week, and when she does call on a contact, compensation may be required for the assistance he or she renders. In general, a professional associate won't be compensated monetarily, but instead will consider that the Sleeper Agent owes him or her a favor. The GM character will call on a favor in return when the opportunity arises. Contacts with underworld or street connections usually demand monetary compensation for the services they render, and experts in the use of skills normally want to be paid for the services they provide.

For underworld or street contacts, this expense is represented by a Wealth check against a purchase DC of 10 for the low-level contact, 15 for the mid-level contact, or 20 for the high-level contact. For skilled experts, the purchase DC is 10 + the ranks the expert has in the appropriate skill.

Extra Talent: At 5th and 8th level, the Sleeper Agent gains a bonus talent, which can be chosen from any talent tree from a base class in which the character has at least one level. The character must meet the prerequisites normally.

Wing Captain

Because they're extraordinarily expensive, mechas usually work in small units on the battlefield. But they're such versatile tools that it takes an incisive, strategic mind to coordinate their efforts. It's not easy simultaneously planning tactics for a half-dozen or more 30-foot-tall armored giants with lasers and missiles and staying alive yourself. That's where the Wing Captain comes in. An officer trained in small-unit tactics and familiar with mechas, he leads from the front of the formation in a mecha of his own. The Wing Captain isn't always literally a captain, ranks vary widely in the many armies and paramilitary organizations that exist in 2053. The Wing Captain generally acts as commander to three to six other mechas (the other player characters, in other words), and has the rank to back up his orders. But few Wing Captains are that spit-and-polish. When your comrades bristle with plasma guns and guided missiles, you want to lead through respect, not because you have an extra stripe on your mecha's shoulder.

Select this class if you want to play a character who acts as a "coach" for the other players and enjoys outwitting his foes before he outfights them, but realize that you're sacrificing some of the focus that other advanced classes, particularly the Mecha Shock Trooper and the Mecha Ace, offer.

Most Wing Captains were once Charismatic heroes. Your brilliant strategies don't mean a thing if no one is listening.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Wing Captain, a character must fulfill the following criteria:

Skills: Diplomacy 6 ranks, Knowledge (strategy) 3 ranks.
Feats: Mecha Operation, Renown.

Class Information

The following information pertains to the Wing Captain advanced class.

Hit Die

The Wing Captain gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

Action Points

The Wing Captain gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

Wing Captain

Mikael Noguchi/Chester Laquian Lawrence

Class Skills

The Wing Captain's class skills are as follows.

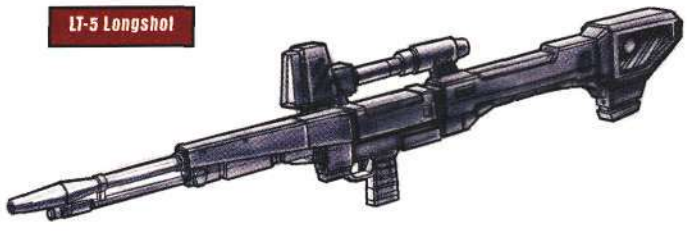
Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (behavioral sciences, civics, current events, mechas, popular culture, strategy) (Int), Navigate (Int), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 7 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Wing Captain advanced class:

Leadership: By directing the actions of others, a Wing Captain can increase his chances of success. This requires a Diplomacy check (DC 10 + the number of allies to be assisted) and a full-round action. A success grants a competence bonus on all his allies' skill checks for 1 minute (or a single task if it requires more than 1 minute to complete). The bonus is equal to the Wing Captain's Charisma bonus. All allies to be affected must be within visual or radio range of the Wing Captain, and must be able to understand him.



Exploit Weakness: At 2nd level, the Wing Captain can designate one opponent and use superior strategy to gain an advantage. The Wing Captain uses a move action and makes a Knowledge (strategy) check. If the check succeeds, for the rest of the combat the Wing Captain may use his Intelligence score rather than his Strength or Dexterity scores for attack rolls as he finds ways to outthink his opponent and notices weaknesses in his opponent's tactics.

Bonus Feat: At 3rd and 7th level, the Wing Captain gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Wing Captain must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it (feats with an asterisk are new for *Mecha Crusade* and are described below): Attentive, Confident, Educated, Iron Will, Mecha Weapons Proficiency*, Mecha Tactician*, Metabot Leader*, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Trustworthy.

Plan: Prior to a dramatic situation, either combat- or skill-related, the Wing Captain can develop a plan of action to handle the situation. Using this talent requires preparation; a Wing Captain can't use this talent when surprised or otherwise unprepared for a particular situation.

The Wing Captain makes a Knowledge (strategy) check (DC 10). The result of the check provides the Wing Captain and his allies with a circumstance bonus. A Wing Captain can't take 10 or 20 when making this check.

Check Result	*Bonus*
9 or lower	+0 (check failed)
10–14	+1
15–24	+2
25 or higher	+3

This bonus can be applied to all skill checks and attack rolls made by the Wing Captain and his allies, but the bonus only lasts for the first 3 rounds. After that time, reduce the bonus by 1 point (to a minimum of +0) for every additional round the situation continues, as the vagaries of circumstance begin to unravel even the best-laid plans.

Small-Unit Tactics: Beginning at 5th level, a Wing Captain can use his tactical knowledge to direct his allies during a battle. By using his attack action, the Wing Captain can grant any one ally (not including himself) within range (see below) a competence bonus on attack rolls or a dodge bonus to Defense and Reflex saving throws. The bonus is equal to the Wing Captain's Intelligence bonus and lasts a number of rounds equal to 1d4 + the Wing Captain's Charisma modifier.

With a full-round action, the Wing Captain grants the selected bonus to all of his allies (including himself) within range (see below). In this case, the bonus lasts a number of rounds equal to the Wing Captain's Charisma modifier.

All allies to be affected must be within visual or radio range of the officer, and must be able to understand him.

No Sweat: Starting at 6th level, whenever a Wing Captain spends 1 action point to improve the result of a die roll, he rolls an additional 1d6. He can then discard the lowest die roll and add the other(s) to his d20 roll.

Uncanny Survival: Beginning at 8th level, the Wing Captain can add his Wing Captain levels to his Defense for 1 round, once per day. He must declare this at the beginning of his turn, and the Defense bonus lasts until his next round of actions.

This ability comes in handy when the Wing Captain's tactics and subordinates aren't enough, and he is forced to withdraw from the field of combat. The boost to Defense helps to ensure that the Wing Captain escapes to lead again.

Fast Tactics: At 9th level, the Wing Captain requires less time to direct his allies. He can direct a single ally with a free action or all allies with an attack action. Even so, the Wing Captain can use fast tactics only once per round.

Sixth Sense: At 10th level, the Wing Captain becomes a near-legendary commander who seemingly knows what the enemy will do before the enemy knows. Whenever the Wing Captain spends an action point during mecha combat, he gets to add an additional 1d6 to the result. So if a 10th-level Wing Captain/4th-level Charismatic hero normally rolls 3d6 when making the appropriate skill check, he now rolls 4d6.

The Wing Captain's sixth sense ability applies to attack rolls and relevant skill checks such as Pilot, Tumble, and Spot. Sixth sense can be combined with the 6th-level ability, no sweat.

NEW FEATS

The following feats augment those described in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*.

Advanced Mecha Operation

You've received advanced training or extensive practice in mecha movement.

Prerequisite: Mecha Operation feat.

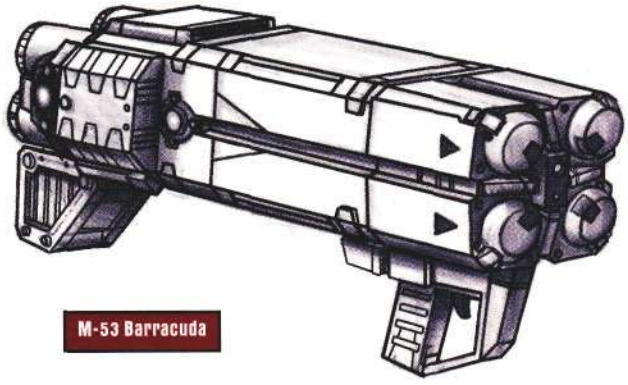
Benefit: Choose a size of mecha (Large, Huge, Gargantuan, or Colossal). When you are piloting a mecha of the appropriate size, you gain a +1 dodge bonus to Defense. Furthermore, armor penalties for operating the mecha are 2 less than they would otherwise be (minimum penalty –0).

Antiarmor Saboteur

You know how to exploit the weak spots of many mecha designs, employing explosives and personal weapons at close range to hit tiny flaws and delicate electronics.

Prerequisite: Demolition 3+ ranks.

Benefit: When attacking a mecha, you can ignore its hardness if you are within 12 meters of it. You cannot use this feat if you are in a mecha yourself because your sensors and weapons lack the precision to hit such tiny areas.



M-53 Barracuda

Control Disruption Attack

You are adept at channeling electricity into an enemy mecha's control system.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus 8+, Precise Shot.

Benefit: If you threaten a critical hit with an electricity attack against another mecha, you may automatically confirm the critical. If you do, the enemy mecha is automatically stunned for 2d4 rounds.

Hair Trigger

You have developed a delicate sense of timing, and your area attacks hit your foes when they're ill-prepared to defend against them.

Prerequisite: Base attack 6+.

Benefit: Whenever you make an attack from your mecha that requires enemies to make Reflex saving throws, the DC for such saves is increased by +2.

Indirect Fire

You can aim heavy weapons in high, arcing paths to hit foes you don't have line of sight to, relying on sensor data, an observer, or guesswork.

Prerequisite: Base attack 4+.

Benefit: You can strike an opponent you don't have line of sight to. It takes a full-round action to make an indirect fire attack. First, designate the 2-meter square you wish to attack, then make a ranged attack roll with the following modifiers.

Condition	*modifier*
Target square acquired through sensor readings (Oracle or similar)	+0
Target square acquired from observer	+2
Successive shots cumulative	+1 per previous shot (maximum bonus of +5)
Observer is providing feedback	cumulative +2 per previous shot (maximum bonus of +10)

The above modifiers are the only ones that apply; other feats and components don't provide attack roll modifiers during indirect fire, and your size and Dexterity don't matter. Nor does the range increment. Because the weapon is being fired in a high, ballistic arc, it can shoot out to 20 range increments.

Even if your attack misses, it'll land according to the scatter rules in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*.

If you hit a 2-meter square, you don't necessarily hit a character in it. Characters have full concealment (and thus a 50% miss chance) from indirect fire that lands in their square. The most effective indirect fire weapons have area effects, and those strike everyone within the area normally.

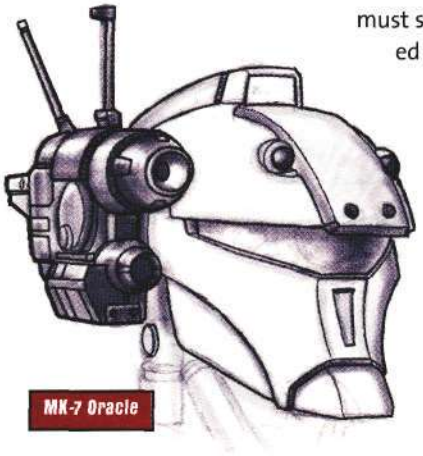
You can't use indirect fire with plasma or laser weapons, and indirect fire is ineffective if the target has cover above them (the attack strikes the cover instead).

Improved Transform

You can rapidly transform your mecha's shape to meet the changing needs of the battlefield.

Benefit: When you pilot a mecha with the Basic Transform or Advanced Transform structural options, you can transform as a move action.

Normal: Transforming a mecha into another configuration is ordinarily a full-round action.



MK-7 Oracle

Improved Maneuverability

You exhibit an uncanny ability to make complex aerial maneuvers with a flying mecha you're piloting.

Benefit: When you pilot a flying mecha, your maneuverability class is one category better than it would otherwise be. This benefit stacks with any similar benefits granted from mecha components or class features. For example, a mecha pilot with Delta D-8 thrusters (poor maneuverability), Kestrel maneuver wings (+1 category), 7 levels in the Mecha Ace advanced class (+1 category), and the Improved Maneuverability feat (+1 category) has perfect maneuverability.

Normal: A mecha's maneuverability class depends on its thruster components.

Laser Dazzle

You can fire your laser weapons at an enemy mecha's sensors, temporarily blinding its pilot.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus 8+, Precise Shot.

Benefit: As a standard action, you can attempt to blind an enemy mecha by making a single attack. The attack deals normal damage if successful, and your foe must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 15) or be blinded for 1d4 rounds.

Mecha Operation

You have basic familiarity with how to pilot a mecha.

Benefit: You no longer suffer the restrictions on movement and penalties on skill checks for being unfamiliar with mecha controls. You can move normally in a mecha and generally perform any action you could if you weren't inside a mecha, subject to the obvious limitations of size. You threaten areas within your reach even if unarmed—the steel fists of your mecha are potent weapons in their own right.

Normal: Characters without this feat suffer a –4 penalty on Pilot checks and any skill checks to which an armor penalty would apply. Furthermore, they cannot run or charge.

Mecha Weapon Proficiency

You know how to acquire targets and fire your mecha's weapons using your onboard computers and sensors.

Benefit: You no longer suffer the standard penalties on attack rolls while you're in your mecha. You can use any feats that refer to firearms with your ranged mecha weapons.

Normal: Characters without this feat suffer a –4 penalty on attack rolls made while they're in a mecha cockpit. Firearm feats don't ordinarily apply to ranged mecha weapons.

Mecha Tactician

You can coordinate the efforts of multiple mechas to great effect in battle.

Benefit: As long as allied mechas remain in tactical communication with you, they gain a +1 morale bonus on attacks and Will saves against fear. Other pilots in your

Mecha Weapons and d20 Modern Feats

If you have the Mecha Weapon Proficiency feat, any feats that apply to firearms (such as Double Tap and Strafe) also apply to relevant ranged mecha weapons. You can strafe with a Comet gatling laser, for example, or fire twice with a Longshot mass driver.

Melee-oriented feats from the Brawl and Combat Martial Arts trees don't apply if you're piloting a mecha, although characters with the Mecha Operation feat threaten all areas within reach of the mecha, and making a slam or other melee attack with a mecha doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. Feats from the Defensive Martial Arts tree function normally for characters in mechas.

mecha gain the same bonus. The effect lasts for 5 rounds, plus an additional round for each point of Charisma bonus you have.

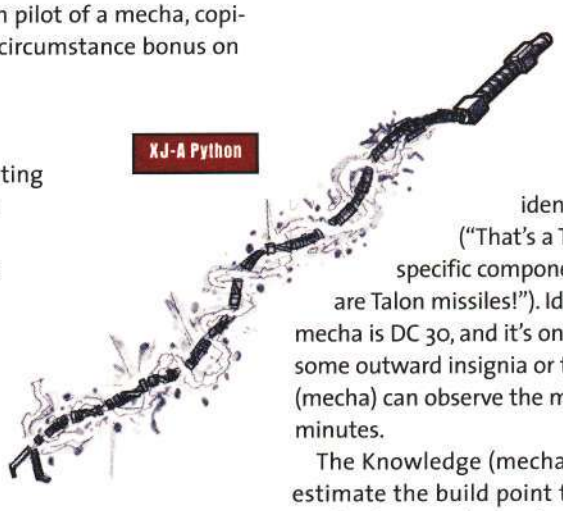
Metabot Leader

You are adept at coordinating the efforts of multiple copilots.

Prerequisite: Mecha Tactician.

Benefit: When you are the main pilot of a mecha, copilots in the same mecha gain a +1 circumstance bonus on attacks and checks.

Plasma Overboost



By disabling safeguards and shunting auxiliary power into your plasma weapons, you can attain greater destructive power at the expense of accuracy.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus 8+, Repair 6+ ranks.

Benefit: When firing a plasma weapon, you can voluntarily take a penalty of up to –5 on your attack roll. If you do, the weapon deals an additional 1d6 points of damage for each –1 penalty you took. The attack penalty persists until the beginning of your next turn, but the additional damage applies only to the next single attack you make.

Thruster Blast

By directing your vectored thrusters all around your mecha, you can kick up a cloud of dust and debris that obscures the battlefield.

Prerequisite: Pilot 10+ ranks.

Benefit: You can aim your thruster exhaust toward the ground to create a hemispherical cloud. If you are within 10 meters of the ground and there's loose debris or dust there, you can create a cloud with a 20-meter radius centered directly below you. The winds so generated snuff out small fires and give guided missiles attacking you a –4 penalty on their attack rolls. Creatures without eye protection caught within the debris cloud are blinded while inside and for 1 round after emerging. The debris cloud grants anyone inside it 50% concealment. Mechas with Enigma sensor suites ignore the concealment effect.

Because mechas have vectored thrust systems, your flight path isn't affected by where you're aiming your exhaust. You don't have to hover or fly upward to create the cloud.

SKILLS

Skills function as described in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*. Their applications may vary a little—in 2053, the Drive skill lets you operate a hovercar, for example—but a hovercar is functionally an automobile so the difference doesn't matter.

Two skills, Knowledge (mecha) and Pilot, deserve further mention here.

Knowledge (Mecha)

A new subcategory of the Knowledge skill, Knowledge (mecha) allows identification of specific models of mechas and components. Generally, identifying a mecha model is DC 10 ("That's a Templar-Zero!"). Identifying a specific component is DC 20 ("Watch out—those are Talon missiles!"). Identifying a specific pilot inside a mecha is DC 30, and it's only possible if the mecha has some outward insignia or the character with Knowledge (mecha) can observe the mystery mecha for at least a few minutes.

The Knowledge (mecha) skill also will let a character estimate the build point total of a heretofore unseen mecha design. The DC for the check is 10 + 5 per 10,000 build points. The GM doesn't tell the player what the DC for the check is, obviously. On a successful check, the character knows the build point value of the mecha within 10%.

Pilot

For simplicity's sake, we've adopted a flight maneuverability system that depends more on the quality of the mecha than on the pilot's skill for simply getting from place to place. You don't have to make Pilot checks to fly across the battlefield—it simply takes too long around the gaming table. Moving on the ground is even easier. You simply do so as if you were a larger creature, making 2-meter adjustments, moving, and charging normally.

But a good Pilot skill bonus still matters because your Pilot skill acts as a ceiling for certain skills you might use while piloting a mecha. If a skill has an armor penalty, you use the lower of your Pilot bonus or the relevant skill bonus when you're making a check. For example, if you want to fly around and behind another mecha using the Tumble skill, you'll attempt a Pilot check or a Tumble check, whichever is lower.

Chapter 3 lists other instances when the Pilot skill is important during combat.

Occupations and Wealth

Mecha Crusade uses the occupations in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*, almost without modification. The sug-

gested campaign setting is only 50 years in the future, so there are still plenty of similarities to the modern world.

One change you may want to make to give your campaign a more anime flair: reduce all the age prerequisites in the occupation listings by two years or more. A lot of Japanese mecha cartoons or manga feature teens—often young teens—behind the controls of ultrapowerful mechas. Chalk it up to cultural differences and include or exclude it in your game as you like.

Wealth

The *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* has a detailed but flexible wealth system, in which characters have a Wealth bonus and pay for items, each of which has a DC. But *Mecha Crusade* measures mecha costs in build points rather than attaching an actual value or a Wealth purchase DC. Why?

It's not good for the game if characters depend on one die roll for so much. If each mecha had a purchase DC, lucky players would get the mecha of their dreams, while their comrades would have to make do with weaker mechas or risk going without one entirely. Worse, the players would all become Dilettantes to get the best mechas possible. And with mechas so important to the game, who could blame them?

Jeff Carlisle

The assumption in *Mecha Crusade* is that the players get assigned their mechas for specific missions. As they get better at what they do (and go up in level), they get assigned better mechas. However, mecha pilots have a certain star quality in the military of 2053, so the player characters' superior officers will usually do what they can to get the characters the mecha gear they want.

Here's what it might sound like in the game world: "Foxtrot team, in 12 hours you'll infiltrate the security cordon around the Subic Bay Supply Depot, then destroy whatever ammunition and fuel you find there."

"Right away, sir," reply the player characters. "We'll need Silvereye mechas with chameleon coating, and at least one of us should have an M-53 Barracuda rocket launcher to handle the actual target. Oh, and let's get energy swords so we can take out light targets without a lot of noise."

Around the game table, the conversation sounds only a little different. "The general describes the mission: in 12 hours, you are to sneak through the security cordon at Subic Bay and destroy the supply depot. He'll authorize up to 20,000 build points each for your mechas," says the GM. The players then eagerly plan what mechas they'll use and which components they'll buy. The player's knowledge of the build point total parallels their characters' knowledge of what mechas will be useful and what the military will actually give them.

Using the conceit of requisitioned, army-issue mechas has a significant side benefit: because they don't technically own the mechas, the characters aren't shy about sacrificing them for the mission. Characters who actually own their mechas almost never eject from even a badly damaged mecha. But if the military will replace the mecha, it's a different—and less frustrating—story.

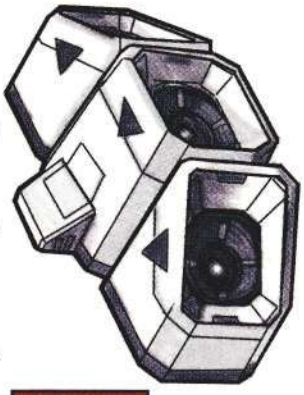
Using the build point system puts a lot of control in the GM's hands. The GM decides what the build point budget will be and has the power to give and take away mechas as he sees fit. Use that power wisely. Chapter 2 has suggested build point budgets for characters at every level. Vary from the suggested budget on the table, sometimes letting the players thrill to mechas laden with gadgetry, and other times testing their ability to make do with second-rate mechas.

CHAPTER TWO: BUILDING A MECHA

Mecha bodies come in Large, Huge, Gargantuan, and Colossal sizes. ***Each body has a number of body slots on it. To build a giant mecha, you just plug components into body slots. Then your character climbs inside, and you're ready for action.***

That's the simple version. In practice, your character will always be requisitioning prototype weapons, angling to get into "elite" units with bigger mecha budgets, and customizing your mecha during spare time. The possibilities for mecha creation are almost limitless. When you launch your own *Mecha Crusade* campaign, take the time to design your own mecha components. And don't be shy about giving them to the bad guys first.

To create a mecha, you'll need some scratch paper, a calculator, and a budget in build points (which your GM will probably provide). Build points (bp) are an abstract measure of the cost of a particular mecha component, bridging the gap between the actual game-world cost of a mecha and *d20 Modern's* wealth system.



Nimbus 3000

STEP 1: CHOOSE A MECHA BODY

Choosing a mecha body is a three-stage process. First, choose how large you want the mecha body to be. Then you'll select the base material you want the structural elements of your mecha to be made of. Finally, you'll select any special qualities (such as a stealth coating or the ability to transform into a submarine) that affect the mecha as a whole.

Mecha Body Size

Each mecha body size has advantages and disadvantages. Bigger mechas are stronger, tougher, and generally more powerful. Some truly mighty weapons and other high-tech components are too massive for smaller mechas to use, but smaller mechas are less expensive and more flexible. It's much easier to sneak into the enemy base with a 4-meter (size Large) mecha that can at least duck through doors and walk through hallways than it would be to sneak past anything with a 20-meter tall (Gargantuan) mecha.

Large Mechas: Essentially big suits of armor, Large mechas excel in urban battlefields and starship boarding actions, where mechas have to move through building interiors to find the enemy. They're also the easiest mechas to pilot. They can't carry the immense array of weapons that bigger mechas can, however, nor are they as strong or durable.

Large mechas have the following body slots available: Helmet, Back, Left Arm, Right Arm, Shoulders, Torso, and Boots.

Large mechas add a +8 equipment bonus to a character's Strength score. They impose a –1 size penalty on attack rolls and to Defense. Depending upon materials used, Large mechas have 100–200 bonus hit points, which are added to the character's total and damaged first. They have a –4 penalty on Hide checks.

Large mechas have a slam attack that deals 1d8 points of damage. They have a reach of 4 meters. Their base speed is 12 meters.

Huge Mechas: The most common size of armor suit, Huge mechas offer a solid balance among cost, agility, and sheer bulk. They're a solid choice on almost any battlefield, though they favor locations where there is at least some variation in terrain. In the wide-open desert of the depths of outer space, they can fall prey to larger mechas.

Huge mechas have the following body slots available: Helmet, Visor, Back, Left Arm, Left Hand, Right Arm, Right Hand, Shoulders, Torso, Belt, and Boots.

Huge mechas add a +16 equipment bonus to a character's Strength score. They impose a –2 size penalty on attack rolls and to Defense. Depending upon materials used, Huge mechas have 200–400 bonus hit points, which are added to the character's total and damaged first. They have a –8 penalty on Hide checks.

Huge mechas have a slam attack that deals 2d6 points of damage. They have a reach of 4 meters. Their base speed is 16 meters.

Table 2–01: Build Point Cost/HP

material type	*hardness*	*Large*	*Huge*	*Gargantuan*	*Colossal*
Alumisteel	10	2,500/100	5,000/200	10,000/400	20,000/800
Duralloy	15	3,000/100	6,000/200	12,000/400	24,000/800
Neovulcanium	20	3,500/100	7,000/200	14,000/400	28,000/800
Refractalloy	15	3,600/100	7,200/200	14,400/400	28,800/800
Crystal carbon	20	4,500/125	9,000/250	18,000/500	36,000/1,000
Megatanium	30	7,500/200	15,000/400	30,000/800	60,000/1,600

Gargantuan Mechas: Units this size are titans of the battlefield, able to destroy almost anything they can hit. Gargantuan mechas are common in outer space environments, but are often too expensive and unwieldy for planetbound missions.

Gargantuan mechas have the following body slots available: Helmet, Visor, Cranium, Upper Back, Lower Back, Left Arm, Left Hand, Right Arm, Right Hand, Left Shoulder, Right Shoulder, Torso 1, Torso 2, Belt, Left Leg, Right Leg, and Boots.

Gargantuan mechas add a +24 equipment bonus to a character's Strength score and a –2 structure penalty to Dexterity. They impose a –4 size penalty on attack rolls and to Defense. Depending upon materials used, Gargantuan mechas have 400–800 bonus hit points, which are added to the character's total and damaged first. They suffer a –12 penalty on Hide checks.

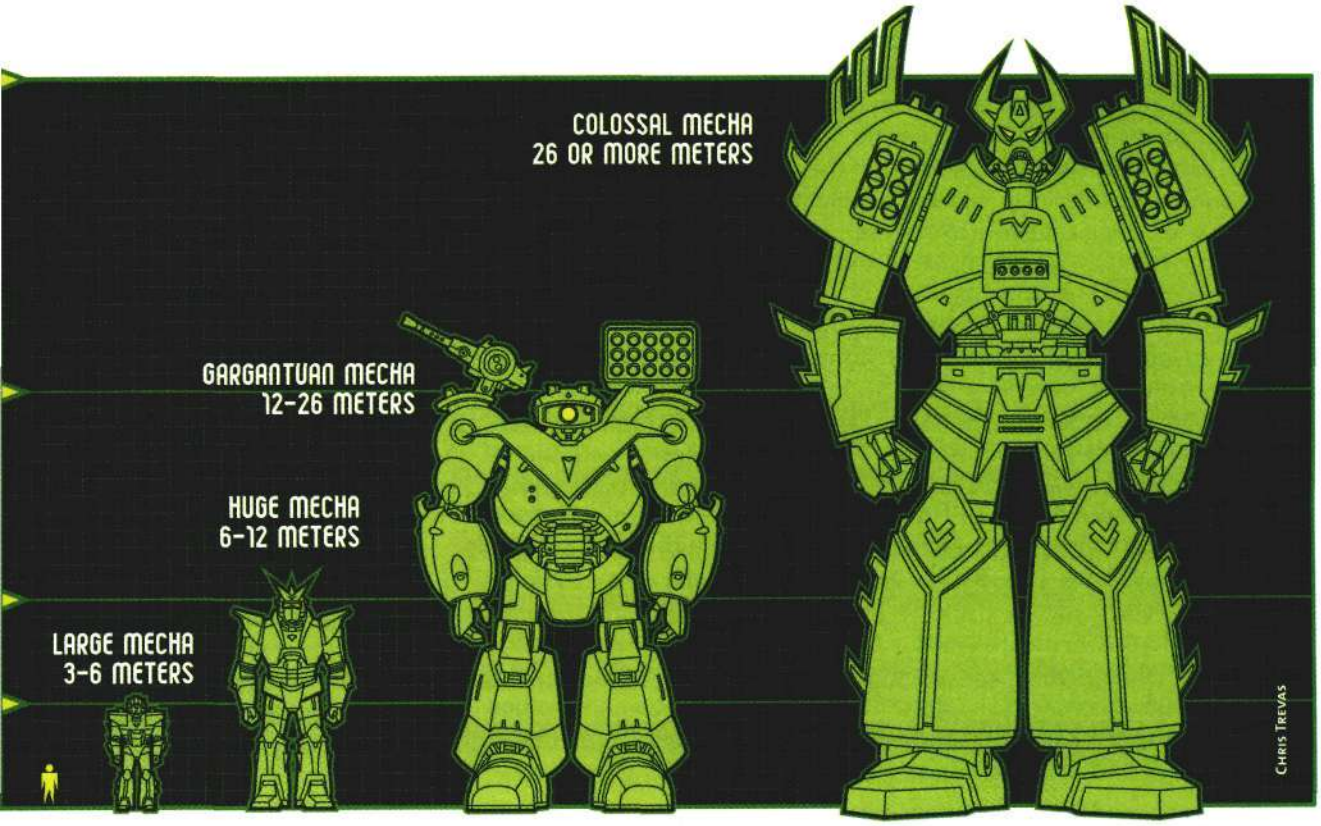
Gargantuan mechas have a slam attack that deals 2d8 points of damage. They have a reach of 6 meters. Their base speed is 20 meters.

Colossal Mechas: Exceedingly rare, these behemoths are largely in the experimental stage, and it's questionable whether their immense cost justifies their ability to singlehandedly dominate the battlefield.

Colossal mechas have the following body slots available: Helmet 1, Helmet 2, Visor, Cranium 1, Cranium 2, Upper Back, Lower Back, Left Arm 1, Left Arm 2, Left Hand, Right Arm 1, Right Arm 2, Right Hand, Left Shoulder, Right Shoulder, Torso 1, Torso 2, Torso 3, Torso 4, Belt 1, Belt 2, Left Leg 1, Left Leg 2, Right Leg 1, Right Leg 2, and Boots.

Colossal mechas add a +32 equipment bonus to a character's Strength score and a –4 structure penalty to Dexterity. They impose a –8 size penalty on attack rolls and to Defense. Depending upon materials used, Colossal mechas have 800–1,600 hit points, which are added to the character's total and damaged first. They suffer a –16 penalty on Hide checks.

Colossal mechas have a slam attack that deals 4d6 points of damage. They have a reach of 6 meters. Their base speed is 24 meters.



Mecha Structure

Once you've decided how large you want your mecha to be, it's time to choose the material from which it was made. The armor skin, interior braces, and other structural parts of a mecha can be made from any sufficiently advanced metal alloy, almost all of which are forged at great expense in secret orbital factories.

Alumisteel: This easy-to-acquire alloy forms the basis for most civilian metal applications. It's lightweight and reasonably strong. Military-grade mechas rarely use it, however, because it just isn't durable enough. It grants a +5 equipment bonus to Defense.

Duralloy: The standard for mecha construction, duralloy is both harder and more durable than alumisteel. It grants a +6 equipment bonus to Defense.

Neovulcanium: Similar to duralloy, neovulcanium uses plasma-forging techniques to create a metal of unparalleled hardness. It grants a +6 equipment bonus to Defense.

Refractalloy: A polymer coating bonded to a layer of duralloy, refractalloy grants laser resistance 20 and heat resistance 20 to a mecha suit made from it. It grants a +6 equipment bonus to Defense.

Crystal Carbon: "Grown" in orbital laboratories, crystal carbon is a composite fiber material that outperforms even neovulcanium on the battlefield. The production process is both delicate and expensive. It grants a +8 equipment bonus to Defense.

Megatanium: Sandwiched layers of crystal carbon and neovulcanium held in a magnetic matrix, megatanium is the current state of the art in armor. It's exceedingly hard and durable. It grants a +10 equipment bonus to Defense.

H42a Excalibur

Structural Options

Structural options differ from the mecha components described because structural options aren't tied to specific mechanisms on the mecha. They're overall attributes that affect all parts of the mecha equally, and they're usually more expensive as the mecha gets larger.

Stealth Kit: Based on high-tech "low observables" technology, this combination of sound baffles, heat dispersers, and nonreflective paint combines to give the mecha a +10 circumstance bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. Cost and the size penalty combine to make this structural option impractical on all but the smallest mechas.

Chameleon Coating: Holographic diodes cover the surface of the mecha, allowing it to change color to blend in with its surroundings, granting it a +20 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. As a side benefit, the mecha can display whatever insignia and markings it likes as a free action.

Advanced Diagnostics: Multiple redundant systems and the ability to detect and correct minor system faults make this mecha able to repair moderate damage. The mecha automatically heals 1 point of damage per round (but only the bonus hit points from the mecha are repaired, not damage to the character inside the mecha).

Nanorepair: State-of-the-art nanites swarm over the surface of the mecha at the first indication of damage. The mecha automatically heals 5 points of damage per round.

Basic Transform: As a full-round action, the mecha can transform into another shape. It's still obviously a mecha, but the components (and overall look) of the second form can be completely different. The second form must have the same number of build points as the original form or less. It must be the same size, made from the same material, and possess all the same structural options, including this one; otherwise it's essentially a completely different mecha. Some mechas, for example, have a flight form with top-grade thrusters and maneuver wings, and a combat form bristling with guns.

Advanced Transform: As the basic transform structural option, except that the form can appear to be something other than a mecha. Anything of approximately the same size—usually a car, starship, or other vehicle—can be the second form. Only a detailed examina-

Table 2–02: Build Point Cost

Structural Option	*Large*	*Huge*	*Gargantuan*	*Colossal*
Stealth Kit	500	1,500	4,500	13,500
Chameleon Coating	2,000	6,000	18,000	54,000
Advanced Diagnostics	3,000	6,000	15,000	32,000
Nanorepair	6,000	15,000	32,000	70,000
Basic Transform	3,000	6,000	13,500	24,000
Advanced Transform	6,000	12,000	27,000	48,000
Join with Metabot	1,500	3,000	—	—
Light Fortification	500	1,000	1,500	3,000
Moderate Fortification	2,000	4,000	7,500	15,000
Heavy Fortification	4,500	9,000	16,000	30,000
Greater Energy Resistance	1,500	3,000	6,000	12,000

Leave Room for the Pilot!

You should leave two slots vacant for the pilot of your mecha. On Large mechas, the pilot almost always occupies two of the following three slots: Helmet, Torso, and Back. But on Huge, Gargantuan, and Colossal mechas, the designer has more choice for placing the cockpit.

If you want to have copilots or passengers aboard your mecha, purchase the Extra Cockpit component below.

tion (Search DC 25) reveals that the alternate shape isn't what it appears to be. The mecha must transform back into its original shape to attack.

Join with Metabot: If a number of mechas all have this structural option, they can transform themselves into part of a larger robot—the metabot—as a full-round action. See Chapter 3 for rules for metabots.

Fortification: Mechas with this structural option have extra struts, shock dampeners, and tempest-hardening that lets them shake off attacks that would fell a normal mecha. Light fortification converts 25% of all critical hits into regular hits, moderate fortification converts 75% of all critical hits into regular hits, and heavy fortification converts all critical hits into regular hits.

Greater Energy Resistance: This mecha has been case-hardened at every stage in the manufacturing process against a specific energy type (chosen from heat, ion, laser, electricity, or plasma). When the mecha would normally take damage from that energy type, subtract 30 points of damage per round from the amount before applying. The greater energy resistance structural option stacks with the energy resistance from mechas made of refractalloy.

STEP 2: SELECT MECHA COMPONENTS

There are hundreds of different mecha components available—anything the finest minds in the Earth Global Alliance and the Colonial Confederation can dream up.

What follows is a sampling of the mecha components available. Each component description follows the same format.

Name: The most common name among mecha designers for the component, usually the brand name of the dominant megacorp model. As the war between the colonies and Earth heats up, new mecha contractors will offer similar designs under different names, and the military research departments of both factions will be working overtime to eke out even slight efficiencies in mecha designs. Some mecha pilots call components by more fanciful monikers. For example, the laser cannon is called the Typhoon 240 by the Yamatetsu Corporation, but the pilot of a particular mecha might call its laser cannon the "starbeam."

Slots: The number of body slots on the mecha required to install the component. If there are limitations on which body slots will accept a particular component, they are listed here. Flight thrusters, for example, are almost always installed in the back slot (a jetpack) or the boots slot (jet boots).

COMPONENT LIST

The following mecha components are divided by category.

Weapons-Ranged

AL3K Dragon flame thrower
Slots: 1
Cost: 3,000 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range: Emanates from mecha
Area: 12-m cone
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Used primarily against soft, unarmored targets, the AL3K Dragon sprays wide areas with liquid flame. Anyone caught within the cone must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 13) or take 4d6 points of heat damage.

M-9 Barrage chaingun
Slots: 1, must be hand (or arm if Large) or shoulder (see text)
Cost: 2,145 bp; 40 bp per ammo belt
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 20 m
Target: Single target within 200 m, or autofire
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Essentially a high-tech medium machinegun, the M-9 Barrage has multiple barrels firing vulcan ammunition that deals 3d6 points of damage on a successful hit. The base unit has enough room for four 50-round ammo belts. Each additional slot you devote to ammo storage has room for six more ammo belts.

L-KEN Corona microwave beam
Slots: 1
Cost: 1,610 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 6 m
Target: Single target within 50 m
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Cursed with short range and a marginal ability to get through most mecha armor, the L-KEN Corona is strictly a small, low-cost weapon option. It deals 5d6 points of heat damage on a successful hit.

Mk.1 Warpath recoilless rifle
Slots: 1 for rifle, must be hand (or arm if Large) or shoulder; 1 for each 20-round ammo bay

The size of some components depends on the size of the mecha they're installed in. If so, select the size appropriate for your mecha. For example, if you're purchasing an Excalibur energy sword for your Huge mecha, you need to select the Huge version of the component, which costs 5,600 build points.

Cost: How much it costs in build points to add the component to a mecha. The cost includes both the component itself and the labor and materials required to install it.

Activation: How long it takes to activate a particular component. It takes an attack action to activate most components.

Range/Range Increment: If a range is listed, it represents the maximum distance between the mecha and the target of the component. If a range increment is listed, it represents the distance at which accuracy begins to decline. Ranged attacks suffer a –2 penalty on attacks for each range increment beyond the first. Unless noted otherwise, most components with a range increment have a maximum range of ten increments.

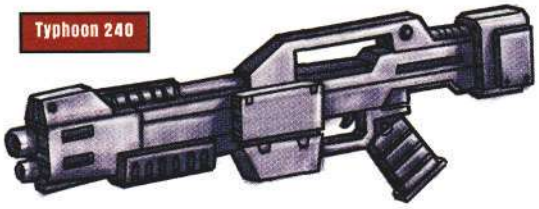
Target or Targets/Effect/Area: The entry starts with one of three headings: "Target," "Effect," or "Area." If the target of the component is "You," you do not receive a saving throw and there is no saving throw entry for the component. If a component is an autofire weapon, it'll be noted here.

Duration: How long a component continues to function before it needs to be reactivated, or how long the effect of a particular component lasts. A duration of "persistent" means the component functions until the mecha is destroyed or the pilot turns it off (generally a free action).

Saving Throw: Whether a component allows a saving throw, what type of saving throw it is, and the effect of a successful save.

Descriptive Text: This section describes how the component functions. If one of the previous portions of the description included "(see text)," this is where you'll find the explanation. If the component is one of a series of related components, you may have to refer to a different component for more information.

Typhoon 240



STEP 3: COMPILE THE NUMBERS

Now that you've created your mecha, it's time to add up all the numbers, calculating your new Strength score, attack bonuses, etc. Playing *Mecha Crusade* will be a frustrating experience if you don't create a second character sheet to use when your character is inside the mecha—there's just too much math to do in your head.

If you built a mecha that transforms or a mecha that can form a metabot, you probably want to create a character sheet for those forms as well.

SAMPLE MECHAS

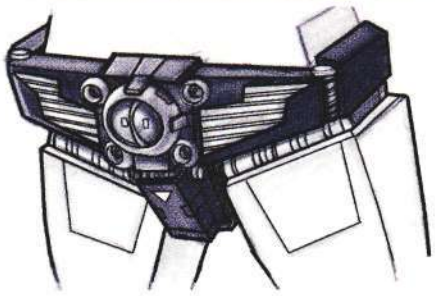
The following mechas are relatively straightforward. Accordingly, they make good mechas for GM characters, or starting points for characters who want to customize an existing design.

Cost: 4,170 bp for rifle; 85 bp per recoilless round
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 16 m
Target: Single target within 160 m, or autofire
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
This rapid-fire cannon relies on shells that detonate after hitting the target to deal its damage. A successful attack deals 10d6 points of damage.

LT-5 Longshot mass driver
Slots: 2 for driver, including hand (or arm if Large) or shoulder; 1 for each 10-round ammo bay
Cost: 7,470 bp for launcher; 150 bp per mass driver round
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 20 m
Target: Single target within 500 m
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The Longshot fires a hyperaccelerated, superdense "bullet" at the target, dealing damage strictly through the massive kinetic energy the round imparts. With a successful ranged attack, a Longshot round deals 15d6 points of damage.

M-53 Barracuda rocket launcher
Slots: 1 for launcher, must be hand (or arm if Large) or shoulder; 1 for each six-rocket pack
Cost: 6,250 bp for launcher; 125 bp per rocket pack
Activation: Attack action
Range: 80 m
Area: 8-meter radius burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
The Barracuda rocket launcher aims "fire and forget" incendiary-tipped rockets at any point within range. When the rocket reaches the designated target point—which can be an actual target or a point in midair—it explodes, dealing 10d6 points of heat damage to everything within its burst radius. A successful Reflex save (DC 17) reduces damage by half.

M-55 Talon missile launcher
Slots: 1 for launcher, must be hand (or arm if Large) or shoulder; 1 for each



M-101 Crysanthemum Doomsday Device

Reliant-12

Large duralloy mecha.

Components: Barrage chaingun (left arm), Cobra laser gauntlet (right arm), Omicron thrusters (back), Oracle targeter (+1) (head), pilot (shoulders and torso).

Mecha provides hardness 15, +6 equipment bonus to defense, 100 bonus hit points, and +8 bonus to Strength. Fly 30 m (clumsy).

Cost: 10,445 build points.

Saber

Large duralloy mecha with join with metabot.

Components: Comet gatling (right arm and shoulders), Excalibur sword (left arm), Delta thrusters (boots), Oracle targeter (+2) (helmet), pilot (back and torso).

Mecha provides hardness 15, +6 equipment bonus to Defense, 100 bonus hit points, and +8 bonus to Strength. Fly 60 m (poor). Five Sabers combine to form one Dimension Knight metabot (see below).

Cost: 17,700 build points.

Silvereye

Huge duralloy mecha.

Components: Typhoon laser cannon (left hand and left arm), Defensor halberd (right hand), Delta thrusters (boots), Enigma sensors (visor), pilot (torso and back).

Mecha provides hardness 15, +6 equipment bonus to Defense, 200 bonus hit points, and +16 bonus to Strength. Fly 60 m (poor).

Cost: 23,200 build points.

How Many Build Points?

Your GM will tell you how many build points your mecha should have depending on the specifics of your *Mecha Crusade* campaign. Here's a list of appropriate build points for player characters of a given level.

Level	*Mecha build points*	*Level*	*Mecha build points*
1st	10,000	11th	40,500
2nd	11,500	12th	46,500
3rd	13,200	13th	53,500
4th	15,200	14th	61,500
5th	17,500	15th	70,800
6th	20,100	16th	81,400
7th	23,100	17th	93,600
8th	26,600	18th	107,600
9th	30,600	19th	123,800
10th	35,200	20th	142,300

GM characters typically have mechas with build points one level lower. A 10th-level GM character, for example, typically pilots a mecha with 30,600 build points. But that's a guideline, not a hard-and-fast rule (see Chapter 3 for more information on appropriate GM characters).

4-missile battery
Cost: 4,800 bp for launcher; 100 bp per missile
Activation: Attack action
Range: 800 m
Target: Single target
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The most common missile launcher installed on mechas, the M-55 Talon enables the pilot to strike foes at a distance unmatched by most energy or projectile weapons. Each Talon missile deals 15d6 points of plasma damage on a successful hit. The missile's guidance system gives it an attack bonus of +10.

Typhoon 240 laser cannon
Slots: 2; including hand (or arm if Large), shoulder (+1,000 bp), or visor (+4,000 bp)
Cost: 3,400 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 30 m
Target: Single target within 300 m
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
A basic, reliable laser cannon, the Typhoon 240 deals 10d6 points of laser damage to a target it strikes with a successful attack.

Tsunami 280 plasma cannon
Slots: 3; including hand (or arm if Large), shoulder (+1,000 bp), or visor (+4,000 bp)
Cost: 9,240 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment/Range: 60 m/20 m
Target/Area: Single target within 600 m, or 20-m cone
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None or Reflex half (see text)
The Tsunami 280 plasma cannon has two aperture settings: focused beam and wide-angle. The mecha pilot can switch between settings as a move action. As a focused beam, the Tsunami requires a successful ranged attack. On the wide-angle setting, usable once per round, the plasma automatically hits everything within 20 meters, but those affected can make a Reflex save (DC 19) for half

Templar-Zero

Huge crystal-carbon mecha with light fortification.

Components: Tsunami plasma cannon (helmet, visor, and left arm), Talon missile launcher (shoulders), extra Talon missiles (right arm), Excalibur sword (right hand), Bulwark shield (left hand), Delta thrusters (boots), Kestrel wings (back), pilot (torso and belt).

Mecha provides hardness 20, +12 bonus to Defense, 250 bonus hit points, and +16 bonus to Strength. Fly 60 m (average).

Cost: 39,540 build points.

Bismarck

Gargantuan crystal carbon mecha with greater energy resistance (laser).

Components: Gladius beam (right hand, torso 1, torso 2), Cobra gauntlet (left hand), Talon missile launcher (left shoulder), extra Talon missiles (right shoulder), Reaper scythe (right hand, left hand; stowed); Delta thrusters (boots), Kestrel wings (upper back, lower back), Haven escape pod (helmet), pilot (visor and cranium).

Mecha grants hardness 20, +8 bonus to Defense, 500 bonus hit points, and a +24 bonus to Strength. Fly 60 m (average).

Cost: 69,900 build points.

Dimension Knight

Gargantuan megatanium mecha.

Components: 2 Comet gatlings (right hand, left hand, torso 1, torso 2), Thunderbolt spear (stowed; right hand) Delta thrusters (boots), Kestrel wings (upper back), Gazelle afterburners (lower back), Oracle targeter (+2) (visor), Enigma sensor (belt), copilot cockpits (right arm, right shoulder, left arm left shoulder. torso 1, torso 2, left leg, right leg), pilot (helmet, cranium)

Mecha grants hardness 30, +10 bonus to Defense, 800 bonus hit points, and a +24 bonus to Strength. Fly 60 m (average).

The Dimension Knight is a metabot composed of five Sabers.

Cost: 72,000 build points.

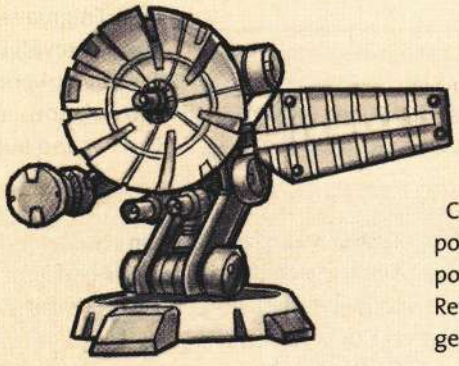
damage. Regardless of the setting, the Tsunami deals 12d6 points of plasma damage to targets it strikes.

CB-4 Cobra laser gauntlet
Slots: 1; must be hand (or arm if Large)
Cost: 3,050 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 10 m
Target: Single target within 100 m
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
A compact laser weapon, the CB-4 Cobra laser gauntlet is primarily used as a back-up weapon. It lacks the range and stopping power of its larger counterparts such as the Typhoon. It deals 7d6 points of laser damage, but the beam diffuses harmlessly after 100 m.

Unlike most components that occupy only a Hand slot, the Cobra can't be disarmed.

M-2 Puma pop-up turret
Slots: 1
Cost: 5,000 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 30 m
Target: Single target within 300 m
Duration: Instantaneous

MK-2 Enigma



Saving Throw: None
A triumph of miniaturization, the M-2 Puma packs significant wallop in a small, versatile (it can be installed in any body slot) package. It deals 8d6 points of plasma damage with a successful hit.

M-101 Crysanthemum doomsday device
Slots: 1
Cost: 6,400 bp
Activation: Standard action
Range: 0 m
Area: 16 m burst centered on you
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
The M-101 Crysanthemum's array of phosphorus lasers deal massive damage to the mecha's surroundings, then burn themselves out, making this a weapon of last resort. Everything within the Crysanthemum's area takes 8d6 points of heat damage and 8d6 points of laser damage. A successful Reflex save (DC 25) means that a target takes only half damage.

M-21 Comet gatling laser
Slots: 2; including hand (or arm if Large) or shoulder
Cost: 3,500 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 30 m
Target: Single target within 300 m, or autofire
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
A rotating ring of laser cannons, the Comet is the most effective autofire laser available to mecha designers. It deals 8d6 points of laser damage

to a target it strikes with a successful attack.

KL-9E1 Gladius spectrum beam
Slots: 3; including hand
Cost: 14,000 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: 60 m
Target: Single target within 600 m
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The Gladius spectrum beam simultaneously projects a laser beam, plasma beam, and ionic particle packet at the target—all riding on an electrical carrier wave. It deals 4d6 points of electrical damage, 8d6 points of laser damage, and 8d6 points of plasma damage to the target, plus 8d6 points of ion damage (see Chapter 3 for ion damage rules).

Weapons-Melee

H42a Excalibur energy sword
Slots: 1; must be hand (or arm if Large)
Cost: 4,200 bp (Large); 5,600 bp (Huge); 7,000 bp (Gargantuan); 8,400 bp (Colossal)
Activation: Attack action
Range: Touch
Target: Single target within reach
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The H42a Excalibur is a mecha-sized melee weapon shaped like a sword. Because it is light and easy to wield, it grants a +3 enhancement bonus on attacks and damage. Of the damage it deals, half is regular damage and the rest is plasma damage.

Damage dealt with a successful melee attack depends on the size of the mecha wielding Excalibur: 4d6 points of damage for Large mechas, 8d6 for Huge, 12d6 for Gargantuan, and 16d6 for Colossal.

L38a Defensor halberd
Slots: 1; must be hand(or arm if Large)
Cost: 2,800 bp (Large); 5,000 bp (Huge); 7,200 bp (Gargantuan); 9,400 bp (Colossal)
Activation: Attack action
Range: Touch
Target: Single target within reach
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The L38a Defensor is a massive carbon-alloy halberd. Damage dealt with a successful melee attack depends on the size of the mecha wielding Defensor: 2d10 points of damage for Large mechas, 4d10 for Huge, 6d10 for Gargantuan, and 8d10 for Colossal. The Defensor has an extra 2 meters of reach.

L38a Defensor

XJ-A Python electric whip
Slots: 1; must be hand(or arm if Large)
Cost: 3,200 bp (Large); 5,400 bp (Huge); 7,600 bp (Gargantuan); 9,800 bp (Colossal)
Activation: Attack action
Range: Touch
Target: Single target within reach
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The XJ-A Python is an electrified cable with embedded servomotors that wrap around the target. The Python deals 2d10 points of electricity damage when wielded by a Large mecha, 4d10 points of electricity damage from a Huge mecha, 6d10 from a Gargantuan one, and 8d10 from a Colossal one. The Python has an extra 6 meters of reach.

When using the Python, you get a +2 equipment bonus on your opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an opponent (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if you fail to disarm your opponent).

Because the whip can wrap around an enemy's leg or other limb, you can make a trip attack with it by succeeding at a melee touch attack. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop or detach the Python to avoid being tripped.

M-1 Thunderbolt plasma spear
Slots: 1; must be hand(or arm if Large)
Cost: 5,800 bp (Large); 7,900 bp (Huge); 10,200 bp (Gargantuan); 12,700 bp (Colossal)
Activation: Attack action
Range/Increment: Touch or 10 m
Target: Single target
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The M-1 Thunderbolt is a versatile weapon that can be wielded in melee combat or thrown. In either case, it deals plasma damage to its target: 6d6 points of damage from a Large mecha, 8d6 from a Huge mecha, 10d6 Gargantuan, or 12d6 Colossal.

If thrown, the Thunderbolt returns to the mecha at the beginning of the next round.

PC-12 Pouncer armor-piercing claws
Slots: 0
Cost: 2,200 bp (Large); 2,600 bp (Huge); 3,600 bp (Gargantuan); 5,200 bp (Colossal)
Activation: Attack action
Range: Touch
Target: Single target
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Attaching sharp claws such as PC-12 Pouncers to the mecha's hands improves their melee attack damage at the expense of some fine motor ability. The claws convert the mecha's slam attack to a claw attack that does damage depending on the mecha's size: Large, 2d6; Huge 2d8; Gargantuan 4d6; and Colossal 4d10.

Mechas with PC-12 Pouncers installed suffer a –2 penalty on all Dexterity-based checks involving delicate hand movements.

RP-91 Reaper beam scythe
Slots: 2; must be hand (or arm if Large)
Cost: 6,600 bp
Activation: Attack action
Range Increment: Touch
Target: Single target within reach
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
The RP-91 Reaper is a crystal carbon shaft housing laser and magnetic field generators. When activated by the mecha pilot, it suspends a laser beam within a razor-thin magnetic "bubble" shaped like a farmer's scythe. It grants a +5 bonus on attack and damage rolls. Because the mecha wields it in both hands, the mecha can apply one and a half times its Strength bonus to the damage roll. Of the damage it deals, half is regular damage and half is laser damage.

Damage dealt with a successful melee attack depends on the size of the mecha wielding Defensor: 4d10 points of damage for Large mechas, 6d10 for Huge, 8d10 for Gargantuan, and 10d10 for Colossal.

Shields

Bulwark v18 defense shield
Slots: 1, must be arm
Cost: 2,000 bp
Activation: None
Range: Touch
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
The Bulwark defense shield resembles a high-tech version of the shields worn by knights of old. Designed to absorb kinetic impacts and dissipate

energy attacks, it improves the mecha's equipment bonus to Defense by an additional +4.

Bastion v20 defense shield
Slots: 1, must be arm
Cost: 4,500 bp
Activation: None
Range: Touch
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
The Bastion functions as the Bulwark, except it improves the mecha's equipment bonus to Defense by an additional +6.

Barricade v23 defense shield
Slots: 1, must be arm
Cost: 10,000 bp
Activation: None
Range: Touch
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
The Bastion functions as the Bulwark, except it improves the mecha's equipment bonus to Defense by an additional +8 and it grants heat resistance 10 and ion resistance 10.

Mk.3 Vanguard point defense shield
Slots: 1, must be arm
Cost: 13,500 bp
Activation: None or free action (see text)
Range: Touch
Target/Area: You or 8-m radius centered on you (see text)
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
The Vanguard point defense shield protects its mecha as other shield components do, and it also uses broadcast magnetics to provide a semipermeable force field in a larger area. Designed to absorb kinetic impacts and dissipate energy attacks, it improves your mecha's equipment bonus to Defense by an additional +4 and provides a +2 deflection bonus to Defense to everyone within 8 meters of you, friend or foe. You can turn the deflection effect on or off once per round as a free action.

Flight Gear

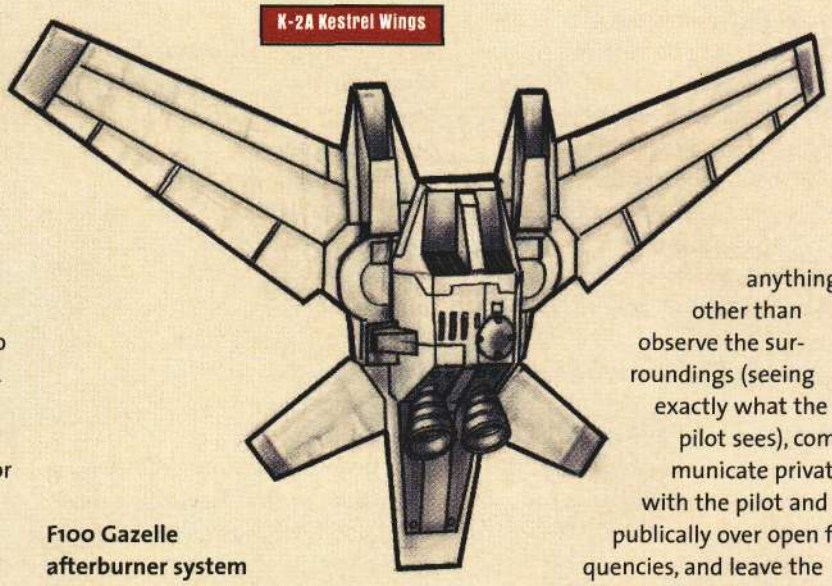
Omicron 1100 thruster backpack
Slots: 1, must be back (Large or Huge); 2, must be back (Gargantuan or Colossal)
Cost: 2,000 bp (Large), 3,000 bp (Huge); 4,000 bp (Gargantuan); 5,000 gp (Colossal)
Activation: None
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Persistent

Saving Throw: None
The most basic flight system available, the Omicron 1100 combines vectored thrusters with military-grade avionics. Mechas with this component gain a fly speed of 30 meters (clumsy).

K-2E Kestrel maneuver wings
Slots: 1, must be back or shoulders (Large or Huge); 2, must be back or shoulders (Gargantuan or Colossal)
Cost: 1,000 bp (Large), 1,500 bp (Huge); 2,000 bp (Gargantuan); 2,500 gp (Colossal)
Activation: None
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
Kestrel maneuver wings combine superior avionics and fly-by-wire technology with a number of finely-tuned vectored thrusters attached to vaguely wing-shaped appendages. A mecha with the Kestrel component improves its flight maneuverability by one category (clumsy to poor, poor to average, etc.)

D-8 Delta thrusters
Slots: 1, must be boots (Large, Huge, or Gargantuan); 2, must be boots or leg (Colossal)
Cost: 4,000 bp (Large), 6,000 bp (Huge); 8,000 bp (Gargantuan); 10,000 bp (Colossal)
Activation: None
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
D-8 Delta thrusters combine more powerful fusion thrusters to grant a mecha a fly speed of 60 meters (poor).

Nimbus 3000 thrusters
Slots: 1, must be boots (Large or Huge); 2, must be boots or leg (Gargantuan or Colossal)
Cost: 8,000 bp (Large), 12,000 bp (Huge); 16,000 bp (Gargantuan); 20,000 gp (Colossal)
Activation: None
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
The best thruster system currently available, Nimbus 3000 thrusters offer matchless velocity. They grant a mecha a fly speed of 80 meters (poor).

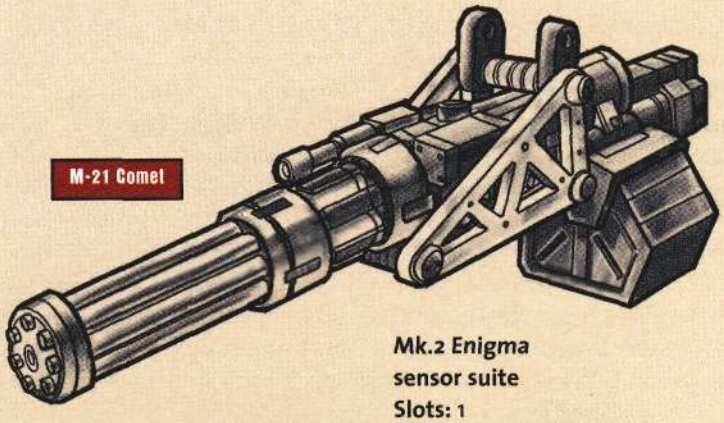


F100 Gazelle afterburner system
Slots: 1, must be torso, legs, or back
Cost: 800 bp (Large), 1.200 bp (Huge); 1,600 bp (Gargantuan); 2,000 gp (Colossal)
Activation: Free action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: None
By dumping raw fuel into the thruster system, the mecha with this component can gain a temporary speed boost. The mecha's fly speed is doubled for 1 round. To gain longer bursts of speed, purchase this component in multiples.

Other Components

Passenger Cockpit
Slots: 2
Cost: 500 bp
Activation: None
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
This component is simply a comfortable place inside the mecha for a passenger to sit. The passenger can't do anything other than observe the surroundings (seeing exactly what the pilot sees), communicate privately with the pilot and publically over open frequencies, and leave the cockpit as a full-round action. As a move action, the pilot can prevent any of the above by shutting off the cameras, locking the hatch, etc.

Copilot Cockpit
Slots: 3
Cost: 2,000 bp
Activation: None
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
Unlike a passenger cockpit, a copilot cockpit allows limited control of the mecha's functions, including the ability to fire the mecha's ranged weapons. Melee combat and movement remain under the control of the character in the main cockpit. Only one character may fire each ranged



weapon each round, but control of the weapons can be switched by any of the copilots as a free action.

As with a passenger cockpit, the pilot in the main cockpit can "lock out" any of the other cockpits as a move action. It takes a Computer Use check (DC 25 if the pilot is disabled, DC 35 if still active) to switch overall control to a copilot cockpit.

Mk. 7 Oracle targeting system
Slots: 1
Cost: 250 bp (+1), 1,000 bp (+2), 2,250 bp (+3), 4,000 bp (+4), 6,250 bp (+5)
Activation: Move action to activate or switch
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Persistent
Saving Throw: None
The standard computer-assisted targeting system, the Mk. 7 Oracle series combines holographic displays and heuristic target-prediction profiling to increase a mecha pilot's accuracy. An Oracle system adds an enhancement bonus on the ranged attack rolls for the mecha component selected by the pilot. The Oracle system has five different varieties (denoted Mk. 7a through Mk. 7e), each providing a different enhancement bonus.

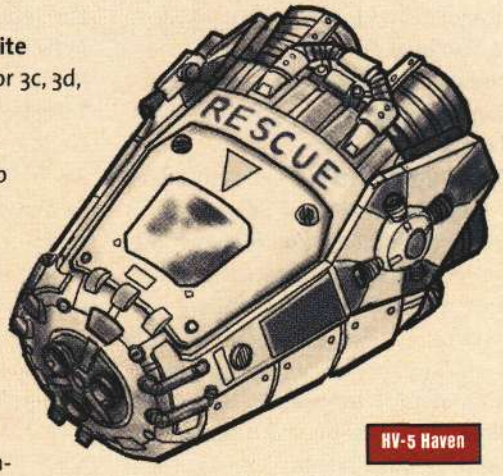
The mecha pilot can change which component the Oracle system is assisting as a move action.

Mk.2 Enigma sensor suite
Slots: 1
Cost: 2,800 bp
Activation: Standard action
Range: 60 m
Target: 8-m radius viewing area
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: None
Using a combination of thermal imaging, X-rays, and ultrasensitive vibration sensors, the Mk.2 Enigma component enables the mecha pilot to effectively see through solid objects. Fine details can't be picked up, but a mecha with an Enigma suite could tell, for example, that three people were crouched behind a closed door, or that an escape tunnel runs from one building to another. Mechas with an Enigma suite also ignore all concealment, because the sensor's computers can filter out environmental effects like fog, smoke, and vegetation.

Mk.3 Delphi sensor/safety suite
Slots: 2 (for 3a and 3b) or 3 (for 3c, 3d, and 3e)
Cost: 4,000 bp (3a), 7,000 bp (3b), 12,000 bp (3c), 20,000 bp (3d), 30,000 (3e)
Activation: Standard action
Range: 60 m
Target: 8-m radius viewing area
Duration: 1 round
Saving Throw: None
The Mk.3 Delphi component combines a Mk. 2 Enigma sensor (described above) with a heuristic collision avoidance system, enhanced pilot restraints, and a series of adrenal and noradrenal autoinjectors for the pilot. In addition to the sensory enhancement, the Delphi provides a resistance bonus on all saving throws: +1 for the Mk.3a version up to +5 for the Mk.3e.

HV-5 Haven escape pod
Slots: 1
Cost: 750 bp
Activation: Free action or move action (see text)
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 3 rounds
Saving Throw: None
The HV-5 Haven escape pod jettisons the cockpit and the mecha pilot from the rest of the mecha (typically because the mecha is about to be destroyed). The pilot can activate it as a move action and move normally at the Haven's fly speed. Or the Haven can be activated as a free action, in which case it flies under the pilot's direction up to its fly speed, but can move no further that round.

The Haven escape pod has a fly speed of 30 meters (clumsy), 50 hp, hardness 10, and a Defense of 18. Three rounds after it jettisons from the mecha, it runs out of fuel, landing or crashing as appropriate.



CHAPTER THREE: RUNNING MECHA CRUSADE

MOST OF THE RULES CHANGES FOR MECHA CRUSADE EXIST BECAUSE THE GAME EMPLOYS THE D20 MODERN RULES, BUT USES THEM IN A FUTURISTIC SETTING. ***But it isn't necessary to come up with new rules just because an element of mecha anime looks futuristic. The hovercars of Martian cities might look different than the sedans and coupes of today, but they behave the same. A smart GM can call it a hovercar, but use the existing vehicles in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, and no one will be the wiser.***

PERSONAL COMBAT

The only real difference between a modern-day battle and one in the year 2053 is the nature of the personal weapons and armor. And while laser pistols and plasma rifles may look flashy, they really don't behave much differently—or perform much better—than their equivalents in 2003. In the mecha genre, personal firearms can be remarkably ineffective, with squads of soldiers missing a foe mere meters away. After all, there has to be a reason to climb into that 5-meter tall experimental mecha waiting in Hangar 9.

The following ranged weapons are generally available in the universe of *Mecha Crusade*. No new melee weapons are prevalent other than the ones mechas use (described in Chapter 2). For a description of what these statistics mean, see Chapter 4 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*.

Like personal weapons, personal armor hasn't advanced much in the fifty years between the present day and *Mecha Crusade*—unless you count the mechas themselves, of course. The following armor types are generally available in the futuristic setting. Note that there's no heavy armor listed. Mechas fulfill that need rather nicely.

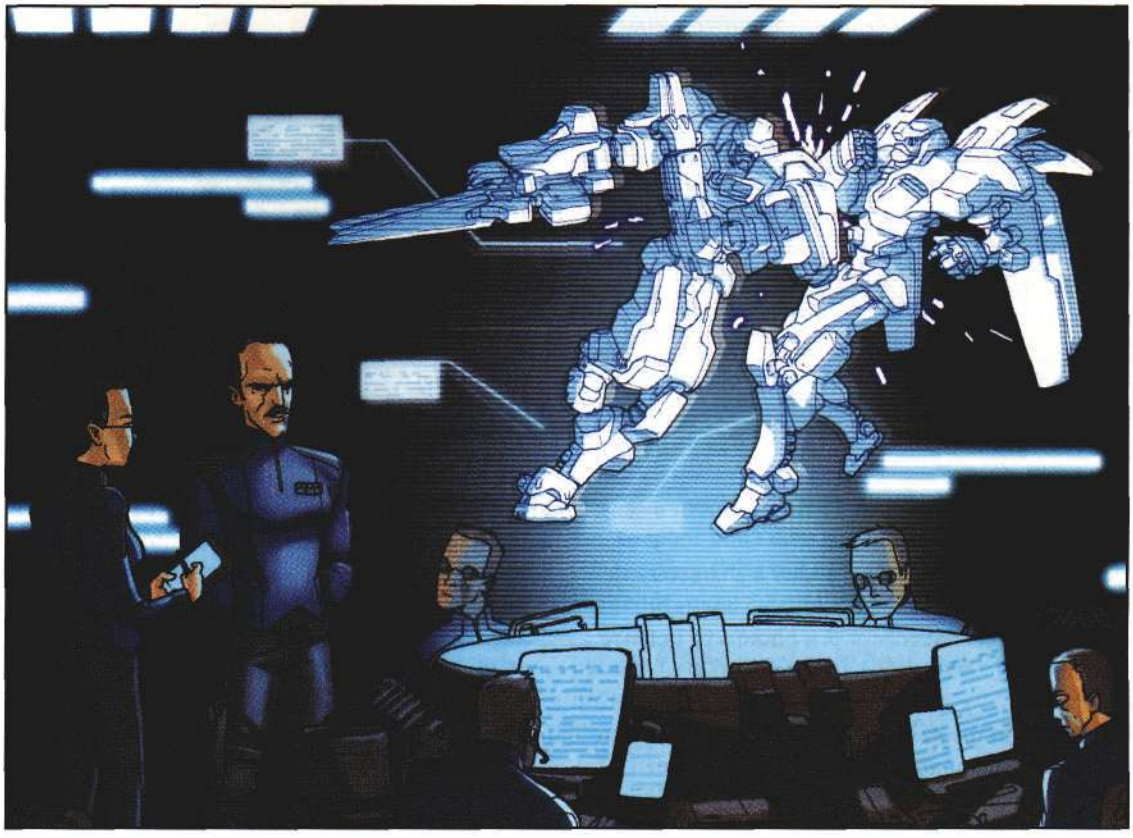
Getting in and out of Mechas

It takes a full-round action to get into a mecha, and a standard action to activate its various systems so it can

TABLE 3–01: RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	*Damage*	*Critical*	*Damage Type*	*Range Increment*	*Rate of Fire*	*Magazine*	*Size*	*Weight*	*Purchase DC*	*Restriction*
Handguns (require the Personal Firearms Proficiency feat)										
Laser burner	2d6	20	Laser	4 m	Single	2 cell	Tiny	1 lb.	14	Lic (+1)
Laser pistol	2d6	20	Laser	12 m	S	10 cell	Small	3 lb.	15	Lic (+1)
Laser blaster	2d6	20	Laser	12 m	S, A	20 cell	Med	3 lb.	18	Res (+2)
Heavy laser pistol	2d8	20	Laser	16 m	S	10 cell	Med	4 lb.	18	Lic (+1)
Longarms (require the Personal Firearms Proficiency feat)										
Commando carbine*	2d6	20	Laser	20 m	S, A	30 cell	Large	7 lb.	20	Res (+2)
Plasma rifle	2d8	20	Plasma	30 m	S, A	30 cell	Large	8 lb.	16	Res (+2)
Sniper rifle	2d12	20	Plasma	50 m	S	10 cell	Huge	35 lb.	22	Lic (+1)
Heavy Weapons (each requires a specific Exotic Firearms Proficiency feat)										
Light plasma cannon	2d12	20	Plasma	44 m	A	200 cell	Huge	75 lb.	22	Mil (+3)
Personal rocket launcher	10d6	—	—	60 m	1	4 int	Large	10 lb.	17	Mil (+3)
Laser gatling	2d8	20	Laser	40 m	A	300 cell	Huge	22 lb.	21	Mil (+3)

*This mastercraft weapon grants a +1 bonus on attack rolls.



JAKE PARKER

move and fight. It takes a full-round action to get out of a mecha, unless you have a Haven escape pod, in which case it's a free action.

MECHA COMBAT

Combat between mechas functions much as it does between characters in their street clothes. Characters piloting mechas are simply much larger and stronger than they otherwise would be, and they can wield truly frightening weapons. But they still obey the essential rules of *d20 Modern* combat. They still threaten squares within their reach, take move actions and attack actions, duck behind cover for a Defense bonus, etc.

In some respects, however, mecha combat is different. The following sections describe specific special situations involving mechas.

Piloting and Movement

In general, mecha pilots don't need to make Pilot checks to steer their mechas around the battlefield. But sometimes, a high bonus in the Pilot skill can be a lifesaver.

The following are some of the ways you can use the Pilot skill in combat:

- When you're trying to move past a foe without provoking an attack of opportunity, you use your Tumble bonus or Pilot bonus, whichever is lower.
- The Pilot skill is used to defend against a trip attempt in the air.

Table 3–02: Armor

Armor	*Type*	*Equipment Bonus*	*Nonprof. Bonus*	*Armor Penalty*	*Speed (12 m)*	*Weight*	*Purchase DC*	*Restriction*
Light Armor								
Leather Jacket	Impromptu	+1	+1	−0	12 m	4 lb.	10	—
Light duraweave	Concealable	+2	+1	−0	12 m	2 lb.	13	Lic (+1)
Duraweave vest	Concealable	+3	+1	−2	12 m	3 lb.	14	Lic (+1)
Medium Armor								
Reinforced vest	Concealable	+4	+2	−3	10 m	4 lb.	15	Lic (+1)
Flight suit	Tactical	+5	+2	−4	10 m	8 lb.	16	Lic (+1)
EVA flight suit	Tactical	+6	+2	−5	10 m	10 lb.	17	Lic (+1)

Table 3–04: Flight Maneuverability

	Perfect	*Good*	*Average*	*Poor*	*Clumsy*
Minimum Forward Speed	None	None	Half	Half	Half
Hover	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Fly Backward	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Reverse	Free	–2 m	—	—	—
Turn	Any	90°/2 m	45°/2 m	45°/2 m	45°/4 m
Turn in Place	Any	+90°/–2 m	+45°/–2 m	No	No
Maximum Turn	Any	Any	90°	45°	45°
Up Angle	Any	Any	60°	45°	45°
Up Speed	Full	Half	Half	Half	Half
Down Angle	Any	Any	Any	45°	45°
Down Speed	Double	Double	Double	Double	Double
Between Down and Up	0	0	2 m	4 m	8 m

- A successful Pilot check can pull a mecha out of a stall (see the Flying Mechas section).
- A successful Pilot check (DC 10) allows a character in a copilot cockpit to grant the main pilot a +2 bonus on attacks, +2 bonus on Pilot checks, or +2 bonus to Defense.

Flying Mechas

The vehicle rules in the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* are entirely appropriate for ground cars and other normal forms of transportation. But even a clumsy mecha is more maneuverable than a typical vehicle.

On the ground, mechas move just like characters. They can turn at any time, move in any direction, and stop on a dime. But in the air, they're more limited.

Most flying mechas have to slow down at least a little to make a turn, and many are limited to fairly wide turns and must maintain a minimum forward speed. Each flying mecha has a maneuverability, as shown on table 3–04: Flight Maneuverability. The components on a flying mecha determine its maneuverability rating.

Minimum Forward Speed: If a flying mech fails to maintain its minimum forward speed, it must land at the end of its movement. If it is too high above the ground to land, it falls straight down, descending 60 meters in the first round of falling. If this distance brings it to the ground, it takes falling damage. If the fall doesn't bring the mecha to the ground, the pilot must succeed at a Pilot check (DC 20) to recover. Otherwise it falls another 120 meters. If it hits the ground, it takes falling damage, Otherwise, it has another chance to recover on its next turn.

Hover: The ability to stay in one place while airborne.

Fly Backward: The ability to fly backward.

Reverse: A mecha with good maneuverability uses up 2 meters of its speed to start flying backward.

Turn: How much the flying mecha can turn after covering the stated distance.

Turn in Place: A creature with good or average maneuverability can "spend" some of its speed to turn in place.

Maximum Turn: How much the mecha can turn in any one space.

Up Angle: The angle at which the mecha can turn in any one space.

Up Speed: How fast the mecha can climb.

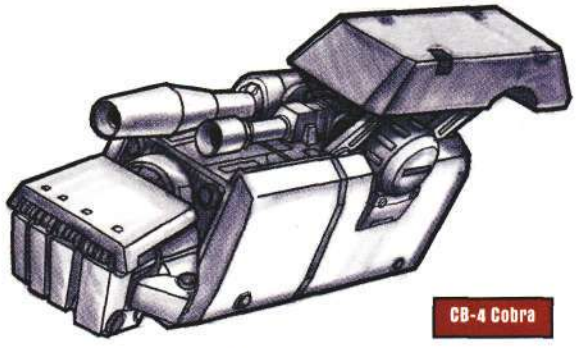
Down Angle: The angle at which the mecha can descend.

Down Speed: A flying mecha can fly down at twice its normal flying speed.

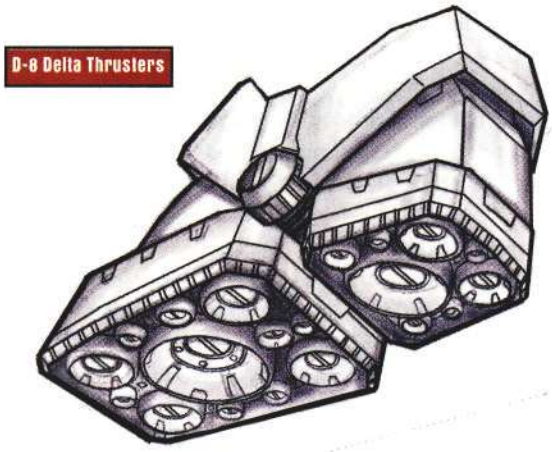
Between Down and Up: An average, poor, or clumsy flier must fly level for a minimum distance after descending and before climbing. Any flying mecha can begin descending after a climb without an intervening distance. Finally all mechas have no minimum forward speed and can hover.

A Note on Scale

Because it's part of the mecha genre, we've adopted meters rather than feet as the base unit of linear measure. For our purposes, 5 feet equal 2 meters. Once you've been playing Mecha Crusade for a while, the notion of a "2-meter adjustment" will seem perfectly normal.



CB-4 Cobra



D-8 Delta Thrusters

Mechas in Space

In outer space, mechas fly just as they do in the atmosphere, with three exceptions. First, all flying mechas improve by one maneuverability category (poor becomes average, average becomes good, etc.). Second, all mechas can ascend and descend without regard to the limitations on Table 3–04, and their speed remains unchanged if they do so. Finally, all mechas can hover and none have a minimum forward speed.

Critical Hits

Whenever you roll a natural 20 on an attack roll against a mecha and confirm your hit with a second successful attack roll, you have scored a critical hit. Likewise, when a mecha rolls a natural 1 on a saving throw against a damaging effect, a critical hit has occurred .

Unlike critical hits to characters not in mechas, a critical hit to a mecha may damage the mecha pilot or some of the individual components of the mecha.

When a critical hit occurs, roll on the following table.

d%	*Effect*
01–40	Extra damage. Attack deals double damage.
41–60	Flaw in armor found. Damage applied to pilot, copilots, or passengers (determine whom randomly), not bonus hit points from mecha structure.
61–80	Component destroyed. Determine which one randomly.
81–100	Control systems failure. Mecha is stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Critical hits against characters not in mechas follow the normal rules for the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*.

Ranged Attacks and Attacks of Opportunity

Mechas only provoke attacks of opportunity from creatures of their size or larger (including other mechas) when they fire a ranged weapon while in a threatened area.

Disarming, Stowing, and the Hand Slot

Any component that uses the Hand slot—and only the Hand slot—can be stowed magnetically against the mecha or in a storage compartment as a move action. This frees up the hand to perform more delicate manipulation (such as opening a door or pressing a button) or grabbing another mecha component.

Conversely, other mechas can disarm you of a component that's only in your hand slot. Other items, such as ones mounted on both the Hand and Arm slots, can't be disarmed.

You can design a mecha that has more components for the Hand slots than Hand slots available. You just can't use them all at once.

Ion Weapons

Ion weapons don't damage a mecha when they hit. Instead, they short out important control systems and can render a mecha motionless.

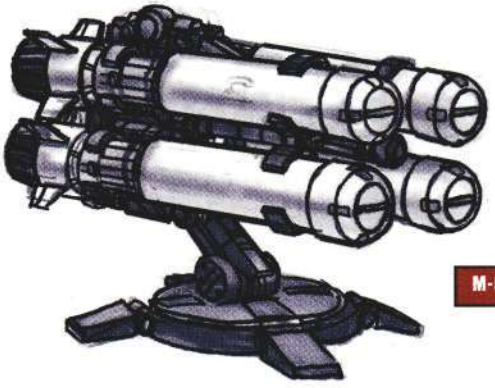
When an ion weapon hits, calculate damage normally, but don't apply it to the mecha. Instead, consult the following chart.

Damage	*Effect*	*Repair Check DC*
11–20	Superficial ionization	10
21–40	Minor ionization	15
41–60	System ionization	20
61–80	Major ionization	25
81+	Catastrophic ionization	30

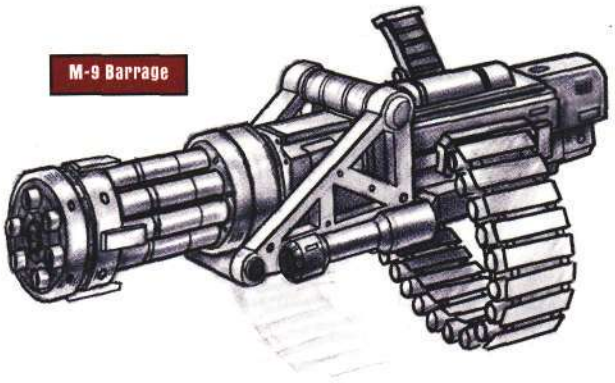
Ionized mechas are treated as stunned with two exceptions: The pilot can take free actions that require no actual movement or attacks, and the pilot can take a full-round action to make a Repair check to dissipate the ionization. If the Repair check succeeds, the mecha can act normally on the following round.

Missile Weapons

Missile weapons (such as Talon missiles) function differently in combat than lasers and mecha fists do. Unlike



M-55 Talon



them, a missile does not necessarily resolve its attack immediately. It must close the distance between itself and its target, which might take a number of rounds.

Firing a Missile Weapon

A missile can be fired at any line-of-sight target within the range listed for the missile launcher component. The attacker designates the missile's target when the missile is deployed; the attacker cannot change the target after the missile has been fired. The missile moves 140 meters each round (average maneuverability) and cannot adjust its velocity for any reason. It takes the most direct route to its target and stops only when it hits its target, runs out of fuel (see below), or explodes. A missile acts on the same initiative count as when it was launched and begins acting as soon as it is fired. A missile follows the same movement rules as flying mechas (including the better maneuverability in space). It will follow its target even if it loses line of sight to it.

Resolving Missile Attacks: When a missile enters the same square as its target, it makes an attack roll using the bonus listed in the component description. If the attack fails, the missile carries on with the rest of its movement (if any), though it cannot attempt to attack the target again in the same round.

Missile Fuel: A missile operates for 6 rounds before it runs out of fuel and burns out. It can make several attempts to hit its target in that time, though not more than one attempt each action.

Avoiding Missile Attacks

Any mecha can attempt to destroy a missile before it reaches the target. All missile weapons have a Defense of 22 and 30 hit points. A missile can suffer ion damage; if it does, it flies straight ahead until it runs out of fuel.

Missiles are fast, but some mechas are faster. It's possible to simply move away from a missile until it runs out of fuel.

Another way to avoid a missile is to force it to strike another target. Because a missile doesn't slow down and flies directly at a target, it's possible for particularly maneuverable mechas to turn more sharply than the missile can match. If the missile runs into something while it's moving, it makes an attack roll (if the other object is a mecha or creature) or simply explodes (if it's a large object like a building).

Multiple Cockpits

Especially in bigger mechas, more than one person can fit inside. Passenger cockpits just allow someone to ride in comfort, communicate with the pilot, and see outside via fiber-optic cameras. Accordingly, passengers have little impact on combat.

Copilot cockpits, on the other hand, allow someone to take an active hand in operating the mecha. The character in the main cockpit is the pilot and controls the overall movement and melee combat for the mecha. Characters in copilot cockpits can fire any of the mecha's ranged weapons, using their attack bonus (as modified by the mecha's size and equipment modifier, if applicable).

A copilot also can grant the main pilot a +2 bonus on attacks or Pilot checks or to Defense if she succeeds at a Pilot check (DC 10).

Copilots act on the initiative point of the pilot in the main cockpit. Only one character can fire a particular weapon each round.

Only the main pilot takes damage if the bonus hit points from the mecha itself are exhausted. Copilots can only be hurt with a critical hit (see below).

Metabots

As a full-round action, any mecha with the appropriate structural option can join with a metabot—a mecha composed of smaller mecha.

Real-Life Science and Mechas

Mecha Crusade technology intentionally doesn't work the way it "should" in the real world. Weapons have unrealistically short ranges, power supplies are almost nonexistent, and—true confessions time—many of the "scientific" descriptions of the weapons are just collections of buzzwords. History hasn't seen an effective animal-shaped mecha since the Trojan Horse.

The source material embraces these genre conventions, and so does the *Mecha Crusade* game. Even though modern missiles can hit targets from miles away, mecha combat is often a face-to-face encounter. And it makes for a better game if the mechas have melee combat as a tactical option, rather than simply lobbing shells at radar-screen blips.

M-1 Thunderbolt

Only Large and Huge mechas can form mechas. From three to six Large mechas form a Gargantuan metabot, and three to six Huge mechas form a Colossal metabot. The mechas that combine to form the metabot can only do so in one specific way. If any mechas are missing, the metabot can't be formed.

Metabots are essentially completely different mechas; they don't need to have the same weapons or other components as the smaller mechas (although they often do). They are almost always made from the same material and have the same structural options as the mechas that joined together to make them (except for the join with metabot structural option, which they're too large to have). The metabot must also have one copilot cockpit for each mecha that joined together to form it.

The advantage to the metabot is its immense build point budget. Each mecha contributes 80% of its build points to the metabot. For example, four Huge 20,000 build point mechas could join together to form a Colossal 64,000 build point metabot.

One of the pilots is responsible for movement and melee combat of the metabot; which mecha pilot becomes the main pilot for the metabot is decided when the metabot is designed. Other characters in copilot cockpits can operate ranged weapons, other components, or assist the main pilot as described in the Multiple Cockpits section above. All the copilots act on the main pilot's initiative point.

A character in any of the metabot's copilot cockpits can break the metabot back into its constituent mechas as a full-round action.

Damage and Metabots: If some of the mechas that comprise the metabot took damage before joining, the metabot has correspondingly fewer hit points as well. Subtract only damage the mechas took; characters inside the mechas may still be hurt, but their missing hit points aren't reflected in the metabot's hit point total.

If the metabot takes damage, then breaks down into its original mechas, simply divide the damage taken equally among the mechas.

Niklas Jansson

CHAPTER FOUR: THE MECHA CRUSADE CAMPAIGN

FIFTY YEARS FROM NOW, THE SOLAR SYSTEM IS AT WAR. ***Thriving colonies on Mars, the asteroid belt, and the moons of Jupiter have forcibly severed ties with an overcrowded, authoritarian Earth. Desperate for raw materials and concerned that political unrest will spread to the teeming masses at home, Earth's government has vowed to bring the colonies back in line. But just as strident are the colonial leaders, who see their future among the stars.***

War was declared months ago, but so far only a handful of skirmishes have been fought as both sides refit their factories to crank out weapons and armor. This war will be fought in the darkness of outer space, the polluted megacities of Earth, and the frozen sands of Mars. Never has a war had such inhospitable, dangerous battlefields.

Thus, mechas will be the dominant force in the coming war. Brave pilots can take them everywhere from the depths of the oceans on Europa to the heat of greenhouse-choked Venus. They wield weapons no ordinary soldier could lift, much less use. Their jetpacks give them unparalleled maneuverability and speed. And they can shrug off bombardments that level the landscape around them. As the war progresses, most generals will learn that the only way to stop a mecha is with another mecha.

The Solar System War of 2053 provides a mix of mecha and nonmecha adventures for *d20 Modern* characters. Characters can act as spies, infiltrating enemy research facilities to steal prototypes and experimental designs. They can try their hand at diplomacy, making sure that the fragile alliance between colonies scattered across the solar system stays united against the oppression of the Earth government.

But eventually characters will strap themselves into their mechas, where they'll fight everything from dug-in Earth troopers to starship interceptors to Earth's mecha-equipped elite soldiers. They'll fight in the ocean depths, in outer space, and among rubble-strewn cities and colony domes. If the heroes fight well, Earth trooper and Colonist partisan alike will recognize their mechas on sight.

THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS, IN BRIEF

It's easier to predict the future a century away than a year away, so *Mecha Crusade* deliberately leaves vague the early part of the 21st century. Suffice it to say that the trend of globalism picks up speed, and by the 2030s most people identify themselves with super-regional entities (European Union, Organization of African Unity, etc.) rather than nation-states. National identity remains important for cultural reasons—Germans still speak German, and Americans still celebrate Thanksgiving—but nations fade as political entities, with most important decisions made on the regional or global level.

The 2020s and 2030s are decades of unparalleled exploration of the solar system. Beginning with a manned mission to Mars in 2020, experimental habitats grow into research installations and eventually into full-fledged colonies. When the Solar System War begins in 2053, 50 million live beyond Earth, mostly on the moon and Mars. Low-gravity manufacturing techniques and exotic material available only off-Earth transform these colonies into economic powerhouses, boasting a standard of living that only the enclaves of Earth's ultra-rich can match.

Back on Earth, overpopulation runs rampant. Shortages of fossil fuels, food, and other raw materials create an economy of scarcity, and billions go to bed hungry. Earth's governments become monolithic, authoritarian regimes in response to crisis upon crisis. By 2039, the trade balance between Earth and the Colonies has reversed, with the colonies sending more goods to Earth than they receive in return.

A dictatorial Earth government beset by deadly pollution, ecological crises, and a restive populace relies on economic support from the Colonies throughout the 2040s. The colonies ship high-tech goods, potent medicines, and raw materials (mostly metals and uranium from the asteroid belt) down the gravity well to earth—at first earning handsome profits for their efforts. But gradually Earth insists on more advantageous terms, and by 2050 the colonies are shipping much of their wealth to Earth and receiving nothing in return.

In the mid-2040s, the first "solar" generation comes of age: colonists' children born and raised away from Earth.

CHRIS GRUN

They see their parents working themselves to exhaustion and their native worlds strip-mined—all so Earth doesn't have to solve its own problems. Accordingly, they question the whole Earth/Colonies relationship. Once out from under the thumb of Earth, the Colonies would thrive like never before (say the young) or at least like they did in the 2030s (say older colonists).

While the colonists debate their future, Earth's leaders listen...and they don't like what they hear. Paranoid about disruptions to the flow of goods, Earth's secret police ruthlessly crack down on colonial dissenters. Some are imprisoned, some are forced back to Earth, and some just disappear. Earth mobilizes division after division of "peacekeepers," and every installation of any size among the Colonies soon has an Earth garrison with a mission to crush dissent and keep the goods flowing.

Almost overnight, the future of the colonies shifts from an abstract philosophical question to a cause worth fighting for. Even apolitical or Earth-loyal colonists are appalled at armies in the streets, ruinous tribute payments, and series of funerals for assassinated colonial leaders. Colony after colony announces its intention to force the garrisons out, end mandatory shipments to Earth, and sever political ties with the mother planet. Negotiations throughout 2052 just ratchet up the tension. And the war begins in February of 2053 when an Earth garrison, seeking "terrorists," seizes control of one of the Moon's colony domes. They depressurize it, killing an estimated 20,000 colonists.

THE SITUATION TODAY

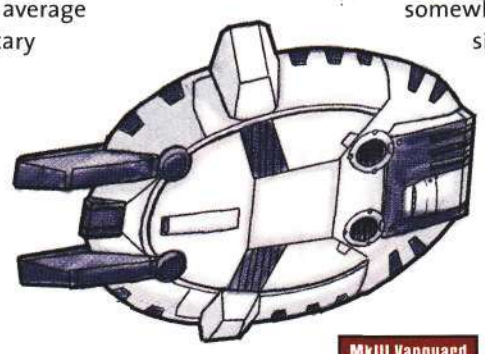
Since February, a few short battles have been fought, but both sides are gearing up for total war. Some of Earth's garrisons withdrew rather than be surrounded by a hostile populace, millions of miles from home. Others tried to seize control of the colonies they guarded, and some just fortified their bases, waiting for further orders. On both sides of the conflict, rumors swirl that the opening moves of a massive invasion are just days away—although the rumors never seem to agree on who's invading whom.

Earth outnumbers the Colonies by a 200 to 1 margin, but the colonists have some key advantages. They have a stronger industrial base, and they're spread out over hundreds of millions of miles. They also have a well-educated, loyal populace strongly motivated to win the war. Earth, on the other hand, has an overwhelming numerical advantage but a population that's ill-fed, ill-equipped, and disinclined to make sacrifices for a war among the stars.

The Colonies face a set of significant problems, however. The fact that they're spread out on two moons, a

planet, and hundreds of smaller installations across the solar system is a double-edged sword that makes reinforcement and coordination difficult. And the colonial leadership on Europa doesn't necessarily consult with their Martian or Lunar counterparts before launching an offensive. Earth's military, on the other hand, is omnipresent and well-organized. The average Colonial soldier is better at her job than the average Earth draftee, but the Colonial military lacks the training and expertise of Earth's elite units.

Finally, it's a bit of an oversimplification to describe the Solar System War as a battle between Earth and the Colonies. Some minor nations on Earth provide tacit or overt support to colonial aspirations, and some smaller installations across the solar system stayed loyal to Earth. And some places (most notably Switzerland and the Lagrange Space Habitat) maintain strict neutrality.



Mkiii Vanguard

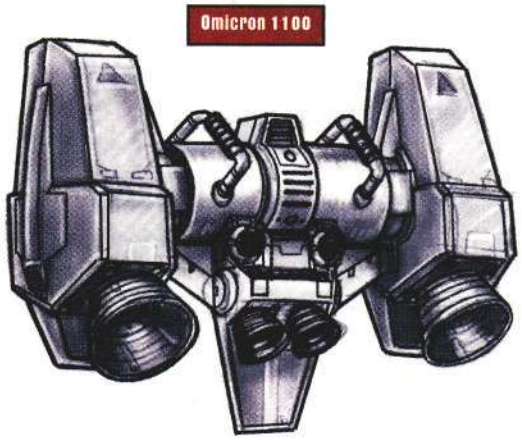
ADVENTURES DURING THE WAR

The number of missions that characters can undertake to advance the cause of freedom is limitless. The following are some broad categories.

- **Opening Moves.** The heroes are just getting used to their mechas when the war begins, and likewise the two armies are just learning the importance of mechas in combat. The heroes may face some nonmechanized opposition, such as Earth garrisons they must dislodge from an important colony site. Fighting ordinary troopers armed with guns (and, more dangerously, crew-served heavy weapons) gets the characters (and consequently the players) used to the power of their mechas. The characters might also do some impromptu diplomatic work, convincing smaller installations to join the cause of colonial freedom. Maybe the heroes are ordinary civilians, and in their first "mission" they take it upon themselves to sneak into an Earth-loyal armory and steal the mechas in storage there. Whatever you decide, you should give the players a sense of the versatility of their mechas by creating encounters that ask them to move around, absorb damage that would kill unarmored characters, and do things they couldn't otherwise do.
- **The Big Invasion.** One of the first major events in a *Mecha Crusade* campaign will be a massive invasion that begins the war in earnest. Either side can invade the other; Earth could attempt to seize the Martian cliff-domes of Valles Marineris, or the Colonies could drop an army onto Madagascar to try to destroy the space-launch facilities there. This will be a massive operation, involving tens of thousands of troopers and thousands of mechas. Assign the characters a limited but important objective during the invasion. They may have to seize (or guard) a stationary missile site, strike a heavily-guarded supply depot, or even launch a diversion attack somewhere far away from the actual invasion. The overall battle will probably be a chaotic, see-saw affair, and the heroes will probably have to act without support from the rest of the military for several days. Adventures built around invasions are particularly good for players who want to feel like they're part of a larger effort, and players who are keenly interested in the overall status of the war.
- **Patrolling the Front.** Whether the big invasion is successful or not, the front will eventually stabilize, and the heroes may be assigned to guard some part of it. This is a good opportunity to ground the characters in a particular environment, whether it's terrestrial or in outer space. The characters will learn the finer points of fighting in the particular environment while they deal with large assaults, attempted infiltrations, enemy patrols, and massive bombardments. It's also a good opportunity to give characters a wide variety of foes, including enemy mechas, masses of unarmored troops, and vehicles such as fighter planes and starships. The front is a versatile place for adventure. At a moment's notice, the heroes can be thrust into almost any tactical situation.
- **Commando Raid.** These missions, among the most dangerous, send the characters far behind enemy lines to perform a mission of strategic importance: sabotage an under-construction battle cruiser, destroy a supply depot, or capture high-ranking leaders in the Earth army or secret police. Commando raids often employ stealth and subterfuge, often disguising themselves to reach their target. Because such missions take place away from the front, the commandos are dangerously exposed to a massive counterattack. Most commando teams rely on the speed and maneuverability of mechas to escape an entire enemy army focusing on them. Because they offer concentrated small-group battles and a reasonable degree of autonomy, commando raids are good missions for players who relish combat after combat.
- **Cloak-and-Dagger Work.** Spies are invaluable in wartime, and characters with useful skills (Hide, Move Silently, Disguise, Bluff) can serve the war effort by uncovering enemy plans, stealing prototypes, and reporting

troop and supply movements. Most spy work occurs outside a mecha, but if the characters are seeking new mecha plans or commandeering experimental enemy mechas, they'll get the chance to strap themselves into armor—probably just in time for the climax to the adventure. Spy adventures are particularly exciting for players who want to spend time inside and outside of their mechas.

- **Cadre Assignments.** If the characters ascend through the ranks and develop a reputation as effective mecha pilots, they may be given new recruits to train. The characters must teach the finer points of mecha combat to their students, keep class rivalries and other intrigues to a minimum, and shepherd them through their first battles. For players who enjoy command and military planning, cadre missions are particularly effective—they get to actually command a bunch of NPCs, and they can set up training regimens and battle plans as they see fit. But other players might find it cumbersome to have to worry about a bunch of low-level NPCs.
- **Guerrilla War.** For one side or another, the war may eventually go poorly. The characters may find themselves forced into hiding—especially if they're in a remote part of Earth or on an isolated colony. From a hidden base, the heroes will use their mechas to strike at the enemy's supplies and rear-echelon troops, disappearing before they can mount a counterstrike. The characters will have to operate without access to the supplies, facilities, and gear of an organized army, but they have a degree of autonomy that soldiers in the army only dream of. If your players are fiercely independent and like the idea of scrounging mecha parts from the wreckage of their foes, guerilla adventures are a good choice.



Adventuring in a Military Setting

The *Mecha Crusade* campaign assumes that the characters are either part of the colonial military or closely allied with them. A military campaign differs from a traditional roleplaying setting in the following ways.

Taking Orders: Rather than enticing the characters to launch a new adventure (and hoping that the promised reward is enough to motivate them), you can simply use a high-ranking NPC to order them into action. This neatly solves the question of character motivation—"why would my character willingly put himself in harm's way?"—but some players perceive it as heavy-handed.

Because players can be stubbornly independent, it's best to give the characters additional motivation to tackle a mission beyond "following orders." The chance to explore a new environment or a shot at taking down a hated foe are good secondary motivations. Promotions in rank, transfer to a prestigious unit, or medals and decorations are good motivators, too. You don't have to bribe your players into undertaking missions, but you can use secondary motivations to subtly reinforce the notion that it's a good idea to follow orders.

The players will be keenly aware of one reward at your disposal: more build points for their mechas. You can promise better mechas if the characters undertake this mission, issue the characters better gear beforehand, or even have the character capture better mechas in the process of achieving the mission objective. But don't feel obligated to give the characters more build points with every mission. As long as your characters' mechas are within a few levels of the build point values suggested in Chapter 3, your campaign is on track.

Ranks Among the Heroes: Not only are heroes under the authority of NPCs of higher rank, but it's possible that they won't have the same rank as the other player characters. One player character might be a captain in charge of a whole platoon of mechas, with the other players comprising his staff officers and trusted sergeants. But if one player can give orders to every other player at the table, that player risks crowding everyone else out of the spotlight. Again, players can be stubbornly independent, and they may resent orders from another player as much as they resent orders from NPCs. Tread carefully whenever you put one player in "command" of another, and consider the personalities of the players involved.

Often, it's simplest to just keep all the characters at the same military rank. But in an ongoing campaign, this approach may strain credulity after a while. It's unusual for four captains to go into battle together, for example, much less four majors or generals. The best solution is for the player "in command" to agree—out loud and ahead of time—to not throw his weight around. Heroes in command will consult with their subordinates more than real-life commanders do, and they'll allow their fellow players a high degree of autonomy. (Player characters in command can be absolute tyrants to low-ranking NPCs, if they like—rank should have its privileges.)

The sort of hierarchy demonstrated in the *Star Trek* television shows is a good example of this kind of drama-based command. The captain of the *Enterprise* is in command, but he defers to crewmembers with expertise he doesn't have. Important decisions are usually reached after consultation and consensus. And when the captain barks out an order, it's usually an order to do something that the crewmember would have done anyway.

Ultimately, the degree to which you want to emphasize the military aspect of the *Mecha Crusade* campaign is up to you. Just make sure that GM and players talk about this issue beforehand. Roleplaying sessions set in a military setting can bog down in the details of command or break apart as the players of subordinate characters resent the power wielded by players of higher ranking characters.

Tsunami 280

Adventures Away from the Battlefield

Even though war rages across the solar system, there's plenty for adventurers to do away from the din of battle.

- **Alien Contact.** The timing is unfortunate for humankind, but researchers find preliminary evidence of life in the chilly depths of Europa's ocean. The characters might lead an undersea expedition to make first contact with well-hidden tentacled creatures, or perhaps they are hired as guards to make sure Earth agents don't disrupt the research.

  Alternatively, maybe the aliens aren't from the solar system at all. They may arrive in a vast battleship armada, ready to conquer and enslave Earth and Colony alike. The characters might be able to avert the invasion, convince the aliens to attack only Earth, or steal advanced technology from them.

- **New Colonies.** Even during a war, new installations spring up wherever there's a resource worth extracting or a scientific curiosity worth studying. Characters who get in on the ground floor of a new colony will have to keep the peace among their fellow colonists and deal with environmental hazards and other risks of living far from civilization. Even if they're far from the front, the characters will have to be alert for attacks or infiltration from Earth. Such an adventure might have a "Wild West" feel to it, with the characters in the role of sheriff, responsible for taking care of the community without any help from the outside world.

- **Rivalry in the Ranks.** Sometimes the best antagonists are the ones who are ostensibly working on the same side as the heroes. When the characters are away from the front lines, they'll still have to contend with with other mecha pilots in their unit. Rivalries have their seeds in the gamut of human emotions: jealousy, anger, a perceived (or real) slight, and so on. An unscrupulous rival can make the heroes' lives miserable in any number of ways: sabotaging their mechas, bad-mouthing them to superiors or comrades, or interfering with the heroes' duties. At first the characters might not even know who their rival is, if it's someone who harbors a secret grudge against the heroes. Eventually, the rivalry will probably lead to an out-and-out fight, whether it's a cowardly double-cross in the middle of battle or a gladiator-style "duel" on an unused training field. But the longer you let the rivalry simmer before it comes to actual blows, the sweeter the payoff of the final confrontation is.

Other Settings

You don't have to use the Solar System War as a backdrop for your campaign. Other campaign ideas include:

Exploring the Stars: Because they excel in a number of hostile environments, it's likely that mechas would be an important part of a space exploration effort. You could center a campaign around a huge starship sent beyond the solar system to explore new worlds in other systems. Such a ship would have a few mecha squadrons to protect the explorers and deal with exotic, dangerous planets. Each adventure could center around the exploration of a particular planet, which could harbor anything from an advanced alien civilization to an insidious virus or huge, hostile carnivores.

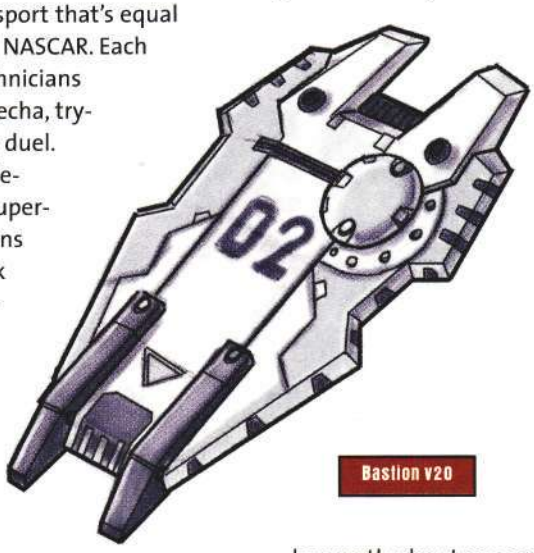
What You Should Do: If you want to run this sort of campaign, you'll need to develop basic rules for starships (perhaps adapting the rules in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*), and you'll want to develop unique ecologies and hazards for each planet the characters visit. Over time, you'll develop key members of the ship's crew as recurring NPCs.

Mectha: Merging man and machine is a dangerous business, and perhaps the programmers who built the mechas in the first place had more sinister designs. In this campaign that crosses traditional mecha action with the horror of the *Call of Cthulhu* game, a secret society is trying to bring the end times near and invite the Elder Ones

to dine on humanity. The characters must use their mechas to face down all sorts of unspeakable horrors—even though they risk their sanity every time they strap themselves in.

What You Should Do: Coming up with scary monsters to fight and adapting the sanity rules from the *Call of Cthulhu* game are two important tasks for the GM before the campaign begins. It'll take trial and error to find the right balance between cerebral horror and fast-paced mecha action. Fundamentally, it'll be difficult to scare characters encased in high-tech powered armor, but the payoff should be worth it.

Mecha Gladiators: The society of the future is stable, prosperous, and bloodthirsty. The characters are mecha pilots who duel professionally in a sport that's equal parts boxing, reality television, and NASCAR. Each gladiator has a support staff of technicians that perpetually tinkers with his mecha, trying to eke out every advantage in a duel. Because the duels are massively televised, high-level mecha pilots are superstars, instantly recognized by millions of fans. The promoters and network executives take great pride in coming up with "interesting" (read: deadly) environments in which the mecha pilots fight.



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What You Should Do: A gladiator campaign requires very little in the way of new or adapted rules, which frees up more time for the GM to devise entertaining arenas for the battles and personalities for rival mecha pilots.

Servomotors and Sorcery: Some unexplained phenomenon sends the mecha-equipped characters into a D&D world—or it infuses a mecha-friendly near-future setting with magic and fantastic creatures. If you've ever wanted to pit an ancient red dragon against 20 tons of composite-fiber powered armor, this is the campaign for you.

What You Should Do: Many of the interactions between magic and mecha should be straightforward, but you'll want to address topics like spell failure chance, damage reduction, magic enhancement bonuses, and so on ahead of time. You'll also need to decide exactly how the mix of fantasy and high-tech happened, and to what degree users of each "technique" understand the other. If you're putting a lot of mecha technology into a fantasy setting, you'll want to give some thought to what sort of mechas the elves, dwarves, and other fantasy races will use. Finally, look through the *Monster Manual* for exciting foes for mecha-equipped characters.

EXPERIENCE AND ENCOUNTERS

Handing out experience points at the end of a *Mecha Crusade* session is relatively straightforward. Every foe the characters faced has a Challenge Rating (CR), and cross-referencing the enemy's CR with the level of the characters on the table in Chapter 8 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* determines how many experience points the player characters collectively receive. The player characters then divide up the experience points equally, assuming every character was present at the beginning.

But even a high-level GM character doesn't pose much of a challenge if the enemy doesn't have a mecha and the characters do. Nor is it much fun for the players if they get trounced by a low-level character with no build point limit on her mecha.

The experience point system assumes that in general, GM characters who use mechas have build points to spend equal to their level – 1 on the build point budget table in Chapter 2. For each two levels above or below that build point level, add or subtract 1 level of CR.

For example, Yukoo is facing an 8th-level GM character known only as Totenkopf. For an ordinary encounter, Totenkopf's skull-adorned mecha should be worth about 23,100 build points—a typical build point budget for a 7th-level character. If Totenkopf has a mecha worth 30,600 build points, Totenkopf becomes CR 9, not CR 8.

For most *Mecha Crusade* campaigns, most experience will be earned by fighting mecha-equipped GM characters. But don't neglect nonmecha foes; send the characters on an adventure from time to time where using mechas is impossible or impractical.

If the player characters are in mechas and the GM characters aren't, the encounter probably isn't a challenge. The high hardness of mecha skin and the prodigious damage from mecha weapons will ensure that any mecha vs. non-mecha fight will end in a quick victory for the mechas. You can add variety to your encounters, though, by adding a few deadly foes that aren't just bad guys in powered armor.

One easy way to do this is by creating hovertanks, air-defense drones, and other armored foes that aren't mechas. The dirty little secret? Design them as you would any other mecha, but describe them differently to your

players. They never need to know that the death tank they just faced had statistics identical to the Bismarck mecha (described in Chapter 3).

You also can loot good encounters from other d20 System games. If you want to have a spaceship vs. mecha dogfight, just borrow X-wings from the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*—the mechas were designed to make good opponents for those starships. And if your campaign features more fantastic elements, take a monster or two from the *Monster Manual*. Often, they need not be magical. Perhaps a wing of wyverns has escaped from a genetics laboratory and rampages across the city until mecha-equipped law enforcement arrives to stop them.

Whether you take starships or sphinxes from another d20 game, run some playtests before you set the CR. There's no formula you can apply to set CR within a game, much less between two games designed for different genres. Fighting the encounter over and over again is the only way to properly assess CR.

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